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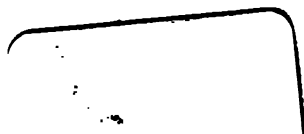
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EARL RIVERS PRESENTING CAXTON TO KING EDWARD IV.

THE  
LIVES  
OF THE  
BRITISH POETS.



LONDON.  
NATHANIEL COOKE.  
1852



JOHNSON'S LIVES  
OF THE  
BRITISH POETS

Completed by  
WILLIAM HAZLITT.



IN FOUR VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

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TO

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, ESQ., M.P.

AS A TRIBUTE

TO POETIC EXCELLENCE AND TO PERSONAL WORTH,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED

BY

WILLIAM HAZLITT.





## PREFACE.

---

THE original advertisement to the first edition of Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* was conceived in these terms :

“ The booksellers having determined to publish a body of English poetry, I was persuaded to promise them a preface to the works of each author ; an undertaking, as it was then presented to my mind, not very extensive or difficult.

“ My purpose was only to have allotted to every poet an advertisement, like those which we find in the French Miscellanies, containing a few dates and a general character ; but I have been led beyond my intention, I hope by the honest desire of giving useful pleasure.

“ In this minute kind of history, the succession of facts is not easily discovered ; and I am not without suspicion that some of Dryden's works are placed in wrong years. I have followed Langbaine, as the best authority for his plays : and if I shall hereafter obtain a more correct chronology, will publish it ; but I do not yet know that my account is erroneous.

“ Dryden's *Remarks on Rymer* have been somewhere printed before. The former edition I have not seen. This was transcribed for the press from his own manuscript.

“ As this undertaking was occasional and unforeseen, I must be supposed to have engaged in it with less provision of materials than might have been accumulated by longer premeditation. Of the later writers at least, I might, by attention and inquiry, have gleaned many particulars, which would have diversified and enlivened my biography. These omissions, which it is now useless to lament, have been often supplied by the kindness of Mr. Steevens and other friends ; and great assistance has been given me by Mr. Spence's collections, of which I consider the communication as a favour worthy of public acknowledgment.”

The number of Lives contained in the present volumes is ten

times greater than those given by Dr. Johnson. With full allowance for the many cases in which, from the almost entire absence of materials, the notice of a poet is confined to a few lines, it is obvious that, to effect the completeness of collection, which has been a leading object with me in the preparation of this work, I could not apportion even to the greater poets, whose biographies I have here added, space at all equal to that which Dr. Johnson, with his very limited series, was enabled to afford to his leading subjects; and the more so that I have made it a point to omit no portion of Dr. Johnson's labours. I have therefore, in the preparation of the new matter, done little more than arrange, as lucidly and efficiently as I could, the chief incidents of each person's life and literary progress, with such cursory notices of the nature and character of his principal productions as the space at my disposal permitted. Should it be objected that I might, by the omission of minor, have made room for the greater development of major subjects, my answer is, that I was desirous of bringing together, for the first time, collective notices of all the British poets of whom any memorials whatever could be obtained; to compile, in fact, a complete biographical dictionary of our poets. I have been quite as much astonished as any of my readers can be at the number of writers in verse, good, bad, and indifferent, who have presented themselves for admission into the series, and of all of whom I was bound, upon my plan, to take cognizance. It is not very probable, however, that future biographers will have many new poets to add.

It may be objected that some of the writers included in this work (as well by Dr. Johnson as by myself), were less noted as poets than as contributors to some other class of literature. I can only say that I have admitted these upon full consideration of the various circumstances of the case. Other writers coming within the same category I have omitted for future occasions, when I hope to give an account of them under their more emphatically appropriate denomination.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

*Chelsea, Feb. 1854.*

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THE

## LIVES OF THE BRITISH POETS.

---

### AMERGIN.

(Circa 1070 B.C.)

THE earliest Irish bard, within the range of any thing like authentic history, is Amergin, the ard-fílea, or chief bard, to his brothers, the princes Heremar and Heber, the Milesians who wrested Ireland from the Danonians in or about the year 1070 B.C. We have also recorded the name Cir Mac Cis, a poet who accompanied these conquerors in their successful invasion. The next mention of Irish bards in historical tradition, or traditionary history (whichever it may be), is under Tighernmas (circa 993 B.C.), by whom the Ollamhs, or dignified bards, were permitted to wear six colours in their garments, only one colour less than were worn by the royal family. The education, office, and privileges of these early poets are described with elaborate minuteness by Mr. Walker, in his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*.

---

### MORIAT.

(Circa 329 B.C.)

It does not appear that the Irish had female bards, or bardesses, properly so called; though a class of women, whose voices recommended them for the avocation, were instructed in music and the *cur-sios* (elegiac measure), that they might assist in the chorus of the funereal song; a custom not improbably derived from the Hebrews, and, with modifications, still continued in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland. But though women, during the heroic ages, held no rank in the order of bards, they cultivated music and poetry,



whose divine powers they often employed in softening the manners of a people rendered ferocious by domestic hostilities. While embattled ranks, writes Mr. Walker, awaited the arrival of expected assailants, women arrayed in black would walk along the lines, animating the soldiery with suitable war-songs, accompanying their voices with *cruits*, or portable harps, such as the Hebrews bore when they danced before the Ark. So, when armies returned in triumph from foreign wars or domestic contentions, troops of virgins, clad in white, *and each bearing a harp*, would advance with tripping step, and with the voice of songs and the harp, to hail their heroes.



Moriat, the subject of the present sketch, employed her metrical powers in the cause at once of love and of justice. In or about the year 339 B.C., Cobthaigh, a king of Ireland, having waded to the throne through the blood of his brother Leoghair and his nephew Oilliol-Arne, only spared the life of his grand-nephew Maon because the natural weakness of his frame seemed to indicate a speedy dissolution; but Maon was destined by the Deity to be the instrument of His vengeance on the barbarous usurper. Being privately conveyed to the court of the king of South Munster, he continued there, and gradually recovered his health indeed, but lost his heart to the fair Moriat, the king's daughter. Nor was the princess insensible to his merit and personal attractions; but she carefully concealed her passion. Maon, for greater security, went to the court of the French king, in whose service he greatly distinguished himself as a warrior. The fame of his valour reached Moriat; and love, vindicating its ascendancy, made her a poetess. She composed an ode, in which she

extolled the exploits of Maon, and urged him to revenge the death of his father and grandfather, and to recover their throne. This ode she transmitted to Maon by the hands of Craftine, her father's chief harper. Seizing a favourable opportunity, the minstrel began to sing the poem in the presence of the prince, whose attention was soon caught by the sweetness of the numbers and the melodious accompaniment of the musician ; but when he heard the subject mentioned, he eagerly inquired the name of the author ; and then, in his turn obeying the power of love, he obtained the aid of the French king, and, setting sail for Ireland, wrested the sceptre from the hands of the usurper. As soon as he was seated on the throne, he adorned it with the lovely poetess.

---

## OISIN (OSSIAN).

(Circa 290.)

Oisín, the son of Fin (Fingal), the heroic favourite of Cormac O'Conn, king of Ireland, is better known to the world as the Ossian of Macpherson than in his own proper person or works, of which latter but a few mutilated and ill-authenticated fragments have come down to us. We know not in what part of Ireland Oisín was born ; but in the county of Donegal there is "a cloud-capt" mountain called *Alt Ossoin*, around which is the whole scenery so finely described by Macpherson, while to the northward of Lough-Derg are the mountains, caverns, and lakes of Fin. Oisín, who was one of the bards as well as one of the captains of his king, lived to lament the death of his son Oscar (the child of his beloved wife Evarallín), who was killed in the battle of Guara, A.D. 296. The period of his own decease is not known ; but it would seem that, for some years previous to that event, he had become blind. The beautiful apostrophe to the sun, in which, in the poem of *Carthín*, Macpherson represents him lamenting the "mist of years which had closed upon his sight," will probably recur to the reader.

---

## FERGUS FIBHEOIL.

(Circa 290.)

Fergus Fibheoil was the chief bard or *ollamh-re-dais* of the great chieftain Fin, mentioned in the preceding notice. The surname Fibheoil (sweet-lips) was given to Fergus in allusion to his eloquence as a bard. Succeeding poets have bestowed almost as many

other epithets of honour on him as Homer has given to his Jupiter. In several poems still extant he is called *fir-glie* (the truly ingenious), *fathach* (superior in knowledge), *focal-geur* (skilled in the choice of words). So persuasive was his eloquence in particular, that, united with his rank, it acquired him an almost universal ascendancy.

But it was in the field of battle that our Milesian Pindar proved of real utility. In a fine ancient heroic poem, called *Cath-Fin-Fragha* (the battle of Fintry), Fin is often represented as calling on Fergus to animate the drooping spirits of his officers, which the bard never fails to do effectually. In this battle Oisín was beginning to yield, which being observed by Fergus, he addressed some encouraging strains to him in a loud voice. These were heard by Oisín, and his foe fell beneath his sword.

Several admirable poems attributed to Fergus are still extant. 1. *Dargo*, written on occasion of a foreign prince of that name invading Ireland. Dargo encountered the Fenii, and was slain by Goll, the son of Morni. 2. *Cath-Gabhra* (the battle of Gabhra). This battle was fought by the Fenii against Cairbre, the king of Ireland, whose aim in provoking the war was to crush that formidable legion. Cairbre's life fell a sacrifice to this bold attempt. These poems abound with imagery, fire, and glowing description, and justify the praises bestowed on Fergus. Each poem concludes with Fergus's attestation of his being the author. Besides these, there are a panegyric on Goll, the son of Morni, and on Usgar. In the latter the poet has interwoven an animating harangue to the hero, who is the subject of it, in the battle of Gabhra. The diction of these panegyrics is pure, nervous, and persuasive.

---

#### DUBTHACH MAC LUGHAIR.

(Circa 448.)

Dubthach Mac Lughair, chief bard to Leogaire, monarch of Ireland, and the introducer of Christianity into that country, turned, says Jocelyn, his poetry, which in his youth he had employed in the praises of false gods, to a better use; and now changing his opinion and language, composed more elegant poems to the honour of the omnipotent God and the praises of his saints.

Feich, or Fiach, a bard who flourished at the same period, and who was appointed a bishop over the church of Sletty by St. Patrick, wrote a hymn, in Irish, in praise of that saint, which has been published, with a literal translation into Latin, by Colgan. Another Christian Irish bard, Cearbhall, is mentioned under this period.

Nor is it to be wondered that the order of the bards should have escaped the fate of the Druids in this great revolution in religion; for it was through the means of the bards only that the prince or chieftain could hope for immortality to his fame. Without them, moreover, the feast, however luxuriously spread, would have been insipid. "So strong was the attachment of the Celtic nations to their poetry and their bards (writes Blair), that amidst all the changes of their governments and manners, even long after the order of the Druids was extinct, and the national religion altered, the bards continued to flourish, not as a set of strolling songsters, like the Greek rhapsodists in Homer's time, but as an order of men highly respected in the state, and supported by a public establishment. We find them, according to the testimonies of Strabo and Diodorus, before the age of Augustus Cæsar; and we find them remaining under the same name, and exercising the same functions as of old, in Ireland and in the north of Scotland, almost down to our own times."

After the introduction of Christianity, some of the Irish bards acted in the double capacity of bards and of clergymen. So late as the 13th century we find Donchad O'Daly, Abbot of Boyle, excelling all the other bards of his time in the hymnal species of poetry.

---

#### LLYWARCH.

(Circa 500.)

Llywarch, commonly called also Hen, is one of the oldest Welsh bards of whom any records have come down to us. His poems are chiefly valuable from their illustrations of the manners and character of an age, of which otherwise but little is known. His chief power lies in pathetic lamentation, and not in heroic poetry, although he is said to have been a warrior. Many of his elegies contain fine sentiments; but either from want of capacity, or from following a bad usage, he cannot take a high rank in bardic literature: he begins long strings of verses with the same words, such as "Eryr Pengwern," "Eryr Mynydd," &c.; and with better effect, "Ystavell Kynddylan." It appears from his poem, that the Order of Bards existed in Wales in his time.

---

#### ANEURIN.

(Circa 500.)

This Welsh bard is chiefly celebrated for his poem, the *Gododin*, which is an account of the adventures of the Ottadini, a tribe of the

Kymry,\* who in very early times inhabited the part of Britain now called *Cumberland*, but who at a later period emigrated into Wales. The whole scene and actions are laid in the north; and the poem seems to be an account of an expedition of the *Oftadini* against the town of *Cataracton*, now *Catterick*. *Aneurin* was held in great estimation by his contemporaries.

---

### TALIESIN.

(*Circa 500.*)

Although both *Taliesin* and *Aneurin* have been styled “king of the bards,” this title seems more justly applicable to the latter; for there is no poem which *Taliesin* has written that can be compared, as a whole, to the *Gododin*, though there are several small poems written by him with more real poetical sentiment than any passage that can be found in the *Gododin*. Unlike *Aneurin*, he does not seem to have followed the profession of arms. There are seventy-seven pieces attributed to him, but some of them are of a much later date; the “*Battle of Gwenustrad*,” the “*Battle of Argoed-Lluyvain*,” the “*Battle of Dyffryn Gwarant*,” and some of the “*Gorchanau*,” are, however, considered genuine.

---

### MERDDIN.

(*Circa 500.*)

Concerning *Merddin* the bard, more popularly known as *Merlin* the Magician, infinite controversy has existed, some critics identifying frequently the man and his works; others totally denying the man and his works; others discovering two *Merddins*, and half a dozen different sets of works; others forming a mosaic out of the various materials in dispute. Mr. Thomas Stephens, author of the *Literature of the Cymri*, an able and very interesting work, published by the liberality of Sir John Guest, has satisfactorily shown, that while a person named *Merddin*, a bard to whom powers of divination were ascribed, appeared as a boy before *Vortigern* in 480, and in the court of *Rhydderch Hael* as an old man, “with hair as white as winter hoar,” and on the point of death in 570, the works that have been

\* A term analogous with the *Κίμμεροι* of Homer, and with the German *Cimbri*.

more or less positively ascribed to him are the productions of a much later period. They are, however, printed as his in the *Myvyrian Archaiology*, and their titles are: 1. A Dialogue between Merddin and Yscolan; 2. Predictions delivered when in his grave; 3. A Dialogue between Merddin and Gwenddyd, his sister; 4. The Apple-tree; 5. The Songs of the Pigs; 6. The Burrowings. The first of these contains all that has been preserved respecting Merddin, though the details are much less full than they subsequently became. Mr. Stephens considers this poem to have been composed in 1077, to further the interests of Cadwalader, who at that period returned from his long exile to reclaim the throne of his ancestors, the successful result of which reclamation is *predicted* in the poem. Merddin is here termed *Supreme Judge of the North Sway, Diviner of every Region, Bardic President about the waters of the Clyde, and Interpreter of the Army of the God of Victory*. Jocelyn of Furness Abbey, who, about 1180, wrote a life of St. Kentigern, seems, on the other hand, to speak of our bard and diviner as being a sort of harmless maniac at the court of Rhydderch-Hoel.

---

#### ST. COLUMBANUS.

(Circa 542-615.)

Columbanus, born in the province of Leinster in Ireland, about the year 542, became, while yet a child, an inmate of the newly-founded monastery of Bangor, on the coast of Ulster, where he spent many years in diligent study and the close observance of pious exercises. About 572, he, with twelve of his brethren, quitted Bangor monastery, and proceeded through Britain to Gaul, where, after being honourably received by Gontram Duke of Burgundy, he founded, first, a monastery among the ruins of Anagrates (Anegray) in the Vosges; and next, when that was found too small for the concourse of brethren whom his high reputation for learning and sanctity collected around him, a larger monastery among the ruins of Luxovium (Luxeuil), with, somewhat later, a dependent establishment at the adjacent locality of Fontanæ (Fontaines). Columbanus himself, though he retained the superintending authority over both these monasteries, appears to have spent a large portion of his time in a hermitage he had constructed in a cave among the rocks, seven miles from Anegray, where he would abide for days together, in solitary musing, agreeable enough with the contemplative and anchoritic character of the Irish and British churches, but little calcu-

lated to dispel the surrounding darkness of paganism. Twelve years after settling at Luxeuil, Columbanus had to defend his fraternity from a persecution raised against them by the Frankish clergy, on account of their following the practice of the British and Irish churches, in opposition to that of the church of Rome, as to the observance of Easter. Columbanus was successful on this occasion; but having incurred the more formidable antagonism of the infamous Brunehaut, he was, about 607, ejected with violence from his monastery, and expelled the kingdom. After various incidents, which belong rather to ecclesiastical than to poetical history, he found his way to the ruins of the Roman town of Bobium, among the Apennines, where, in 615, he founded the monastery of Bobbio. It was here that, in the few months which remained to him of life—for he died on the 21st of November of the same year—he composed the poems which have entitled him to a position in this work. “These productions show,” says Mr. Wright, in his valuable *Biogra-*



IONA.

*phia Britannica Literaria*, “that Columbanus was not ignorant of ancient history and fable, and that he had read attentively a certain class of authors. The style is simple, and not incorrect; but there is little spirit or vigour in his versification. He frequently imitates the later poets, and, like them, is too partial to dactylic measures, a fault which strikes us in his hexameters, most of which

have a dactyl for their base. He also possesses another fault in common with all the poets of the middle ages—the frequent use of unnecessary particles, inserted only to help the verse. The subject of Columbanus's poetry never varies; all his pieces are designed to convey to his friends his exhortations to quit the vanities and vexations of the world, which he seems to have thought would be longer retained in their memory if expressed in metre."

The prose writings of St. Columbanus—for despite his heterodoxy concerning Easter, our poet received canonisation—have also been frequently reprinted; they are all of a religious and controversial character.

## CÆDMON.

(Circa 620-680.)

Cædmon, the earliest of our Anglo-Saxon poets whose productions have been transmitted to us, and who may therefore be regarded as the proto-poet of England, was born in Northumberland, in February, about the year 620, and in his youth served as cowherd upon some proprietor's estate near Whitby. He was, we are informed by



WHITBY CATHEDRAL.

Venerable Bede, so ignorant, that he had not *even* learned any poetry; so that often, when at supper in the common hall the harp was moved towards him, that he might, according to the custom of the period,



sing for the entertainment of the company, he would rise for very shame and retire to his own cottage. One night, having thus withdrawn to the stables, where it was his turn to watch, he lay down and immediately fell into a deep slumber. While thus entranced, a stranger appeared beside him, and said, "Cædmon, sing to me." Cædmon answered, "I cannot sing; it was because I cannot sing that I left the hall." The stranger insisted, "I am sure thou hast something to sing." "What can I sing?" returned Cædmon. "Sing the creation," said the stranger; and thereupon Cædmon found verses rise to his lips which he had never heard before. Cædmon then awoke: the stranger had vanished; but the poor cowherd, whom he had inspired, was able not only to repeat the lines he had uttered in his sleep, but to continue, in flowing verse, the narrative of which they formed the exordium. Next morning he repaired to the bailiff of Whitby, who accompanied him to the Abbess Hilda, before whom, and several monks assembled for the purpose, he recited the poem he had so marvellously acquired. The learned auditory at once pronounced that he had received the gift of song from Heaven; and expounding to him, in his native tongue, a portion of Scripture, requested him to reproduce it in verse. Cædmon returned home with his theme; and by the next day had composed a poem so excellent, that the abbess and her learned friends were in ecstasies. Upon their earnest entreaty Cædmon became a monk, and applied himself to the conversion into verse of the whole of the Scriptures. He was never able to master the art of reading; but it was his practice continually to repeat to himself what he heard, and "like a clean animal, ruminating it, he turned it into most sweet verse." We learn from Bede that our poet's works, as they existed in his time (he died 735), treated successively of the whole history of Genesis, of the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to the land of promise, with many other sacred histories; of the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension; of the advent of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of the Apostles, the terrors of the day of judgment, the pains of hell, and the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom. The course of Cædmon's life after he became a monk was tranquil and happy. His death took place, it is conjectured, in the year 680. He was buried in the monastery of Whitby, where, according to William of Malmesbury, his bones were discovered in the earlier part of the twelfth century. His works, originally printed at Amsterdam, in 1635, from a manuscript presented by Archbishop Usher to Junius, the eminent philologist, were, in 1832, edited by Mr. Thorpe, by whom the text, carefully formed from the original manuscript, has been accompanied with a literal English version.



CEDMON RECEIVING INSPIRATION IN HIS SLEEP.



## ALDHELM.

(Circa 656-709.)

Aldhelm was the son of Kenred, or Kenter, kinsman of Ina, king of the West Saxons. He was born in 656, at Caer Bladon, now Malmesbury, in Wiltshire. He had part of his education abroad and part at home, under Meildulf, an Irish monk, who had built a little cell among the ruins of an ancient town in the forest which then covered the north-eastern districts of Wiltshire. Upon the death of Meildulf, Aldhelm, by the help of Eleutherius, Bishop of Winchester, built (circa 683) a monastery where the cell had stood, and was himself its first abbot. When Hedda, Bishop of the West Saxons, died, Wessex was divided into two dioceses, Winchester and Shireburn; and King Ina promoted Aldhelm to the latter see, comprehending Dorsetshire, Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall. He was consecrated at Rome by Pope Sergius I.; and Godwin tells us that he had the courage to reprove his Holiness for his incontinence. Aldhelm, by the directions of a diocesan synod, wrote a book against the mistake of the Britons concerning the celebration of Easter, which brought over many of them to the Catholic usage in that point. He likewise produced a work, partly in prose and partly in hexameter Latin verse, in praise of virginity, dedicated to Ethelburga, Abbess of Barking, and published amongst Bede's *Opuscula*, besides several other treatises, which are mentioned by Bale and William of Malmesbury, the latter of whom gives him the following character as a writer: "The language of the Greeks is close and concise, that of the Romans splendid, and that of the English pompous and swelling: as for Aldhelm, he is moderate in his style, and seldom makes use of foreign terms, and never without necessity. His Catholic meaning is clothed with eloquence, and his most vehement assertions adorned with the colours of rhetoric. If you read him with attention, you would take him for a Grecian by his acuteness, a Roman by his elegance, and an Englishman by the pomp of his language." The monkish authors, according to custom, have ascribed various miracles to Aldhelm. That he was the first Englishman who ever wrote in Latin, he himself tells us in one of his treatises on metre: "These things have I written concerning the kinds and measures of verse, collected with much labour, but whether useful I know not; though I am conscious to myself I have a right to boast as Virgil did:

'I first, returning from th' Aonian hill,  
Will lead the Muses to my native land.'

William of Malmesbury tells us, after King Alfred, that the people -

in Aldhelm's time were half barbarians, and little attentive to religious discourses; wherefore the holy man, placing himself upon a bridge, used often to stop them, and sing ballads of his own composition. He thereby gained the favour and attention of the populace; and insensibly mixing grave and religious things with those of a jocular kind, he by this means succeeded better than he could have done by severity. As a composer of Anglo-Saxon verse, King Alfred places Aldhelm in the first rank; and we learn from William of Malmesbury that, so late as the twelfth century, some pieces which were attributed to him continued to be popular. He was also eminent as a musician. As a poet his best work is considered to be the *Ænigmata*, written in imitation of Symposius. Aldhelm lived in great esteem till his death, which happened at Ditton, near Westbury, May 25th, 709. He was buried at Malmesbury.

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#### TATWINE.

(Died 734.)

Tatwine was a monk of Bredon, in Worcestershire, who, by his religion, his prudence, his solid knowledge of the Scriptures, and his talents, attained the dignity of Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 10th June, 731. He is presumed to have been at that time an old man; at all events, he did not enjoy his honours long, for he died on the 30th July, 734. He had, however, the satisfaction, during his brief prelacy, of successfully pleading, before Pope Gregory III., the supremacy of Canterbury over York; and he himself received, as metropolitan, the pallium from the Pope's hands. Besides a volume of *Ænigmata*, in Latin hexameters, the versification of which has considerable merit, Bale informs us that Tatwine wrote other poems, which, however, are not now extant.

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#### ETHELWOLF.

(Circa 765.)

Ethelwolf, the third Anglo-Latin poet of whom we have any memorial, was born about the year 765, in Northumberland; and became, about 780, an inmate of a monastery dependent upon the great monastery of Lindisfarne. The work by which he entitled himself to a place among the poets of Britain, is a history, in Latin hexameters, of the abbots and other eminent persons of the monas-

tery to which he belonged. The poem, which is dedicated to Egbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne (802-818), has little metrical merit ; but it is to a certain extent valuable as an historical document, and interesting as the only specimen we have of the Anglo-Latin poetry of that period. Ethelwolf was the author also of another Latin poem, in honour of some contemporary ecclesiastics, among whom he sings the praises of his monastic instructor, Father Iglac.

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### CORMAC, KING OF MUNSTER.

(Circa 780.)

Cormac united the pontifical and regal dignities ; he was, at the same time, Archbishop of Cashel and King of Munster. He was likewise a poet ; and to his capacity in this respect we owe the completion of the Psalter of Cashel, of which he disposes in his poetical will, "My Psalter," which is given at full length in Keating's *History of Ireland*.

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### WULFSTAN.

(Circa 990.)

Wulfstan, one of the singing-men of the church of Winchester, is the author of a narrative of the miracles of St. Swithun, in Latin hexameters, with a prologue in elegiacs, addressed to Alfheh Bishop of Winchester. The work, Mr. Wright says, is a remarkable monument of the Anglo-Latin poetry of the tenth century. Although undeserving of the extravagant praise bestowed upon it by Leland, it contains many tolerable passages. In the introduction the poet gives an account of the rebuilding of the church of Winchester. Wulfstan was also the author of a treatise *On the Harmony of Tones*, which William of Malmesbury eulogises as of very great ability ; and of a life of his master, Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, in very wretched Latin prose.

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## GODFREY OF WINCHESTER.

(Circa 1100.)

Godfrey, Prior of Winchester, was an epigrammatist in the reign of Henry I., very much admired by Camden, who, in his *Remains*, quotes several of his epigrams, and takes occasion to commend Winchester as a nursery of men excelling in the poetical faculty, adding that *the very genius loci doth seem poetical*.

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## TUROLD.

(Circa 1140.)

Turol, an English minstrel in the reign and perhaps at the court of Stephen (1135-1154), is known to us as the author of the earliest existing romance in the Anglo-Norman language, the *Chanson de Roland*. The theme is the disastrous battle of Roncevaux, which had already been made popular in the Latin story incorrectly ascribed to Bishop Turpin, and which has been so repeatedly sung by the poets of later ages. "The composition," says Mr. Wright, "is one in which, though devoid of the artificial ornaments of more refined poetry, the story marches on with a kind of lofty grandeur, which was well calculated to move the hearts of the hearers for whom it was intended, and which, even to a modern reader, is not without its charms. The primitive form of the language has also a certain degree of dignity, which was lost in its subsequent transformations. The form of the verse has some peculiarities: it is one of the oldest poems in which, instead of rhyming couplets, we have a continuous series of lines, varying in number, bound together by one final rhyme; and this rhyme, or rather assonance, rests upon the last two or three vowels, entirely independent of the consonants. As in most of the early romances, the largest portion of the poem of Turol consists of battle-scenes, descriptions most suitable to the taste of a warlike age, which are told with somewhat of Homeric vigour; while, in relating the disasters of the war, the poet introduces pathetic traits which sometimes possess considerable beauty."

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## HOWELL AB OWAIN.

(Circa 1140.)

Howell was the son of Owain Gwynedd, by a lady named Pyvog, daughter of an Irish warrior. He seems to have been brought up from his earliest youth in the profession of arms. In 1144 he went into North Wales with his brother; and, after defeating the Flemings, laid siege to Carmarthen Castle, which they took from the Normans. Howell seems to have been often called upon to assist his neighbours, who had great faith in his military talents. About this time occurred the battle of Tal y Moelre, at which he was probably present, as there is an ode of his on the battle, which he could scarcely have written without having been an eye-witness. Howell's father died in 1169, after a reign of fifty-two years; and Howell being the eldest son, though he was illegitimate, seized the reins of government. Going to Ireland, however, his brother David, during his absence from his dominions, aspired to deprive Howell of the sovereign power. Howell hearing of this, returned in all haste; but in the battle which ensued he was defeated and mortally wounded.

Of his poems, in which there is a great deal of feeling and taste, the principal is *Gutadgarwch Hywell*, or "Howell's Patriotism," in praise of the good things to be found in Wales.

## G WALCHMAI.

(Circa 1150.)

By Gwalchmai, the son of Meilyr, we have fourteen pieces, of which the best is the *Goiwffedd*, which has passages that remind one of the *Allegro* of Milton, and of some of the smaller poems of Wordsworth. He is, however, better known by his ode on the battle of Tal y Moelre, the defeat of the fleet sent by Henry II. under the orders of Madoc ap Meredydd, in 1157, and which tried to effect its landing at Abermenai. This poem is not only full of poetical beauty, but is true to nature; it is a reflection of the time, place, and circumstance. Gray's *Triumphs of Owen* is a translation of this poem.



## LAURENCE OF DURHAM.

(Died 1154.)

Laurence, a monk and precentor of Durham, who afterwards enjoyed the favour of King Stephen, in the capacity of his chaplain, and was made by him, in 1149, prior of Durham, is the author of a Scriptural History in nine books, written in Latin elegiacs, under the title of *Hypognosticon*; of a Latin *Rhyme on Christ and his Disciples*; and of a poem, also in Latin, *On the City and Bishopric of Dur-*



DURHAM CATHEDRAL.

*ham, by way of dialogue between Laurence and Peter.* The versification, more especially of the *Hypognosticon*, is characterised by considerable elegance and facility. Laurence—who is described by an old historian of Durham, quoted by Mr. Wright, as “a man of great discretion and honest conversation, skilled in the law, endowed with eloquence, well grounded in the divine institutes, and not needing to beg counsel of others in adversity,”—wrote in mixed prose and

verse, an imitation of the *De Consolatione* of Boethius, under the title of *Consolatio pro Morte Amici*; a life, in prose, of St. Bridget; and various other works of the same character.

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## RICHARD I.

(1159-1199.)

Though Henry I. obtained the fair appellation of Beauclerc, or the learned, no author has ascribed any composition to him; so that we must, not without surprise, attribute the earliest place in the catalogue of the royal poets of England to his fierce grandson, Cœur de Lion, who, towards the end of his father's reign, lived much in the court of the princes of Provence, learned their language, and practised their poetry, then called the *gaye science*, and the standard of politeness of that age. The English, who had a turn for numbers, are particularly said to have cultivated that dialect, finding their own tongue too stubborn and inflexible. Crescimmini, in his *Commentary on the Lives of the Provençal Poets*, says, that Richard, being struck with the sweetness of that tongue, set

himself to compose a sonnet therein, which he sent to the Princess Stephanetta, wife of Hugh de Baux, and daughter of Gisbert, Count of Provence; that afterwards residing at the court of Provence, he employed himself in rhyming in that language; and that when he was a prisoner, he composed some sonnets in Provençal, which he sent to Beatrice, Countess of Provence, and in which he complains of his men and barons of England, Normandy, Poitiers, and Gascony, allowing him to remain so long in captivity. Guilhem Breton, the troubadour, records of Cœur de Lion that he "could skilfully make stanzas on the eyes of fair ladies;" and there is a story, so interesting that we would fain believe it true, which affords another illustration of Richard's talent in the minstrel art. The king on his return from the Crusades, about the year 1193, was taken prisoner by the Duke of Austria. The remainder of the story, as related in the translation of M. Favine's *Theatre of Honour and Knighthood*, runs thus:

"The Englishmen were more than a whole yeare without hearing any tydings of their king, or in what place he was kept prisoner. He had trained up in his court a rimer or minstrill, called Blondell de Nesle, who (so saith the manuscript of old poesies, and an auncient manuscript French chronicle,) being so long without the sight of his



CASTLE OF DURRENSTEIN.

lord, his life seemed wearisome to him, and he became confounded with melancholly. Knowne it was that he came backe from the Holy Land; but none could tell in what countrey he arrived. Whereupon

this Blondel, resolving to make search for him in many countries, but he would heare some newes of him, after expence of divers dayes in travaile, he came to a towne (by good hap) neere to the castell where his maister King Richard was kept. Of his host he demanded to whom the castell appertained, and the host told him that it belonged to the Duke of Austria. Then he inquired whether there were any prisoners therein detained or no; for alwayes he made such secret questionings wheresoever he came. And the hoste gave answer there was one onely prisoner, but he knew not what he was, and yet he had bin detained there more then the space of a yeare. When Blondel heard this, he wrought such meanes, that he became acquainted with them of the castell, as minstrels doe easily win acquaintance any where; but see the king he could not, neither understand that it was he. One day he sat directly before a window of the castell where King Richard was kept prisoner, and began to sing a song in French, which King Richard and Blondel had some time composed together. When King Richard heard the song, he knew it was Blondel that sung it; and when Blondel paused at halfe of the song, the king began the other half and completed it. Thus Blondel won knowledge of the king his maister, and returning home into England, made the barons of the countrie acquainted where the king was."

Various *sirventes*, satirical and declamatory personal attacks in verse, attributed to Richard Cœur de Lion, have been printed by Le Roux de Lincy, in his *Chants Historiques*; by M. Raynouard, in his *Choix des Poésies des Troubadours*; and in the *Annuaire Historique* for 1837.



EFFIGY OF  
RICHARD I.



SEAL OF RICHARD I.

## OWAIN KYVEILIOG, PRINCE OF POWIS.

(Circa 1162.)

Owain Kyveiliog was the son of Griffith ap Meredith, prince of one of the three divisions of Wales called Powis. He seems to have taken an active part in the military and political affairs of his day. Upon the death of his father, his elder brother succeeded to the sovereignty, and he was busily engaged in the affairs of his district. He was in great favour with the English court, which may, in some measure, account for that regard for the Saxons which he shewed in his after-life.

In the year 1165, Wales was threatened with an invasion by Henry II., in consequence of an incursion into Tegenyl, then in the possession of the king, by the son of Owain Gwynedd, king of North Wales. Henry came to Oswestry with his army, intending wholly to destroy the people of Wales. The princes of the three divisions, on their part, prepared to receive him. In the battle which followed the king's forces were defeated.

It is generally considered that the *Hirlas Horn* was composed on the occasion of the battle of Crogen, as it was called; but this is highly questionable, because there is no mention made in it of the allied army, but merely of the Powysian chiefs. Owain afterwards owned the allegiance of Henry II., and died in 1197.

His poem of the *Hirlas Horn* is one of the longest poems we have of the 12th century, and has more than ordinary merit. Its plan is as follows:—The prince fancies himself assembled with his followers in the evening after a bloody battle, which had been fought in the morning; he calls his cup-bearer, and bids him fill the “*Hirlas Horn* ;” and as each warrior drinks from the cup, he recounts his feats. He begins each verse with “*Duvallaw di venestr*”—“*Fill, cup-bearer!*” First of all he orders the goblet to be presented to a chieftain named Rhys, and then narrates that warrior's actions. There is much ingenuity shown in diversifying the praise awarded to each. The “*Hirlas horn*” is a drinking-horn, long, blue, and rimmed with silver.

Our poet has left us another poem, describing an interesting national custom, *The Circuit through Powys*, on which the king travelled through his dominions to receive his revenues and to hold courts.

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## HOWEL AB OWAIN.

(Circa 1165.)

Howel ab Owain succeeded his father, Owain Gwynedd, as king of North Wales, in 1169, and was killed two years after in a battle with a relative, who contested the crown with him. His death is lamented in a noble elegy written by his foster-brother, Perif ab Kedifor, two of whose brothers were slain in the same battle, and buried with the king at Bangor; and who is also the author of a fine Englynion, printed in the *Welsh Archaeology*, and which commemorates the valiant deeds of the seven sons of Kedifor. The king himself is regarded by Mr. Stephens as a "most sprightly and charming poet. The short poems he has left us are the sweetest productions of the age, and free from verbal intricacies and affected images; while, full to overflowing of a love of natural scenery and gay humour, they are really very delicious little morsels."

## EINIÖN AP GWALCHMAI.

(Circa 1180.)

Einiön ap Gwalchmai, son of the Gwalchmai already noticed, was the author of numerous poems, five of which have escaped the ravages of time. A selection from these may be found in Mr. Stephens's *Literature of the Kymri*. One of these is an elegy on Nest, the daughter of Howel ab Owain, the poet-king just noticed.

## MADOC AP IDDON.

(Died 1180.)

Madoc ap Iddon, king of Gwent, in South Wales, "a man who knew many arts and sciences, so that there was not found his equal in his time, and who was the best poet and wit of any in Wales," is identified by Mr. Stephens as the author of a predictive Welsh poem entitled *Arymes Prydain Vaur* (the Destiny of Great Britain), excelling in poetic fire, descriptive power, and elegance of diction. The subject is the war between the Saxons and the Kymri, and the final expulsion of the former from these islands. The poems have been attributed both to Goeyddon, a bard in the 7th century, and to Taliesin; but Mr. Stephens assigns sound reasons for rejecting the claims that have been asserted on their behalf.

## KYNDELW BRYDYDD MAWR, &amp;c.

(Circa 1194.)

Between the years 1194 and 1200 many bards of note flourished in Wales. Of their productions we have 12 poems by Davydd Ben-vras, 1 by Einion ap Gwan, 5 by Einion ap Gwalchmai, 6 by Einion Wan, 2 by Gwilym Ryvel, 2 by Gruffydd ap Gwrgeneu, 2 by Gwynvardd Brycheiniog, 7 by Llewellyn Vardd, 3 by Seisyll, 6 by Philip Brydydd, 32 by Llywarch ap Llywelyn, commonly called "Prydgdd y Moch," and 50 by Kynddelw Brydydd Mawr, or the great poet. The latter was a man of great and varied powers in other respects; but his poetry, as presented to us by Mr. Stephens, is far inferior to that of Llywarch ap Llewellyn.

## LLYWARCH LLEW CAD.

(Circa 1190.)

This poet is the author of twelve Englynions in praise of Madoc ap Meredydd, prince of Powys, printed in the *Myvyrian Archæology*, which Mr. Stephens considers "among the most interesting poems of the period. They throw much light upon the military history and habits of the country, shew the influence of the Norman manners in their proximity to the people of Powys, and of the intercourse of the Powysian princes with the English court. In the whole range of our literature we have not as lively a portrait of a chieftain; the minutest features are noticed, without the general effect being lost sight of; and Llewellyn ap Madoc stands as palpable before us as on canvas. In the easy flow of the language, the minuteness of the description, and the spirit of the whole delineation, we have a collection of merits not frequently to be met with in the works of the bards."

## HERMAN.

(Circa 1180.)

Herman, an Anglo-Norman poet in the reign of Henry II., is the author of various religious poems, now scattered in manuscripts, partly in England and partly in France. They comprise *La Vie de Tobie*, in 1400 lines, which commence with the Creation *Les Joies*

*de Notre Dame*, which contains, among other things, a curious account of ancient Rome; a poetical dissertation, in 800 lines, on the three words, smoke, rain, and woman, which, according to Solomon, drive a man from his house; a fabulous history of the preaching and miracles of the Magdalen at Marseilles; and a poem in 7000 or 8000 lines, on the history of the Virgin Mary.

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SERLO.

(Circa 1220.)

Serlo, who, from a canon of York, became a monk of Fountains Abbey, and then of Kirkstall Abbey, where he died about 1120, nearly one hundred years old, is the author of a Latin song or chant on the *Battle of the Standard*, printed by Twysden in the *Decem Scriptores*; of another chant on the death of Sumerled, king of Man (1164); and of three metrical treatises on diction.

There was another Serlo, at about the same time, a monk of Dover, who wrote poems on various subjects.

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BOSON.

(Circa 1180.)

Boson or Bozun, identified by the Abbé de la Rue as the nephew and secretary of Pope Adrian IV., was an English *trouvère*, who wrote lives, in Anglo-Norman verse, of nine female saints, and an abridgment, in the same form and language, of the New Testament.

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DANIEL CHURCHE.

(Circa 1180.)

Daniel Church, called also, by a latinisation of his surname, Ecclesiensis, was a domestic, we know not of what particular description, in the court of Henry II. He wrote in Latin a book of moral distichs, which he called variously *Cato Parvus*, *Facetus*, and *Urbanus*; and which was intended for, and became, a sort of supplement to, or companion of, a poem exceedingly popular at that period, under the name of *Disticha Catonis de Moribus ad Filium*, or *Cato's Morals*.



The Latin original, which is distributed into four books, under the name of *Dionysius Cato*, or frequently *Magnus Cato*, is of altogether uncertain authorship. It was not written either by Cato the Censor or by Cato of Utica (however perfectly in the character of the former, and though Aulus Gellius has quoted Cato's poem *De Moribus*), nor is it the work of Seneca or of Ausonius, to both of whom it has been absurdly attributed. It is more ancient than the time of the Emperor Valentinian III., who died 455; less so than Lucan's *Pharsalia*, since the author, in his second book, commends Lucan. The name of Cato probably became prefixed to these distichs, in a lower age, by the officious ignorance of transcribers, and from the acquiescence of readers equally ignorant, as Marcus Cato had written a set of moral distichs. Whoever was the author, this metrical system of ethics had attained the highest degree of estimation in the barbarous ages. Among Langbaine's manuscripts, bequeathed to the University of Oxford by Anthony Wood, it is accompanied with a Saxon paraphrase. John of Salisbury, in his *Polycraticon*, mentions it as the favourite and established manual in the education of boys. To enumerate no others, it is much applauded by Isidore the old etymologist, Alcuin, and Abelard; and we must acknowledge that the writer, exclusive of the utility of his precepts, possesses the merit of a nervous and elegant brevity. He is perpetually quoted by Chaucer, commended by Caxton (who also translated it into English) as the "beste boke for to be taught to yonge children in scole;" and on the restoration of learning in Europe, was illustrated with a commentary by Erasmus, which is much extolled by Luther.

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#### THOMAS OF BEVERLEY.

(Circa 1180.)

Thomas, a native of Beverley in Yorkshire, and a monk of the abbey of Fresmont in Picardy, is known as the author of a life, principally in verse, of St. Margaret of Jerusalem, a large portion of which was printed by Manriquez in his *Annales Cistercienses*, under the year 1187 and some following years.

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#### GUALO.

(Circa 1180.)

Gualo, surnamed Brito and Britannus, is the author of some poetical fables against the monks, printed by Flaccus Illyricus,

## HUGO SOTOVAGINA.

(Circa 1180.)

Hugo Sotovagina, chanter and archdeacon of York in the reign of Henry II., is the author of a Latin poem on the *Battle of the Standard*, mentioned by Richard of Hexham; of Latin elegiacs against the degeneracy of the age; and of several short poems, in the same language, against the corruption of the monks.

## WALTER MAPES.

(Circa 1197.)

Walter Mapes, or rather Map, rector of Westbury and archdeacon of Oxford (1197), was a great favourite with Henry II., to whom he was chaplain, and who esteemed him alike for his learning, his wit, and his courtly manners. He was born in Gloucestershire or Herefordshire, of a family that had rendered, he tells us, good service to Henry II.; and he studied in the University of Paris under Gerard la Pucelle (circa 1160). On his return to England he became a favourite at court, and familiar in the household of Thomas Becket, some of his conversations with whom, previous to his attainment of the archiepiscopal see (1162), he himself relates. In 1173 we find Walter Map one of the judges ambulant at the assize at Gloucester; and with the court at Limoges, in attendance, by royal command, upon Peter, archbishop of Limoges. He accompanied the king in his war against his sons, and was sent by him on missions to Louis le Jeune, king of France, and to Pope Alexander III. at Rome; on which occasion he took part in the controversy between his friend Giraldus Cambrensis and Hubert archbishop of Canterbury, respecting the rights of the church of St. David's. On the same occasion, the Lateran Council of 1179, Map (in his *De Nugis Curialium Distinctionibus*) informs us he was selected to address and argue with the Waldensian deputies, who had been sent to Rome to seek papal authorisation to preach and expound the Scriptures in the vernacular tongue. In 1196, Map, who was already rector of Westbury, canon of St. Paul's, and precentor of Lincoln, was made archdeacon of Oxford. He is supposed to have died about the year 1210. Walter Mapes is known to the lovers of middle-age romance as the composer of various popular legends of that important portion of the cycle of King Arthur and his Knights, comprising the *Roman de Lancelot du Lac*, the

*Quelle du Saint Graal*, and the *Roman de la Mort Arthur*. Another of his works, the earliest that has been traced, is a jocose treatise against matrimony, in Latin prose, which, after obtaining considerable popularity, was inserted by the author in his *De Nugis Curialium Distinctionibus*, a singular olio of satire and stories on all sorts of subjects. There are many Latin poems which go under the name of Mapes, but his editor, Mr. Wright, seems to consider that the only production in this class which can positively be identified with him is the *Apocalypsis Goliae Episcopi*, an attack upon the corruptions of the court of Rome, upon monks in general, and upon the Cistercians in particular; his public indignation against whose vices was materially aggravated—as is not unfrequently the case in such matters—by his private wrath at various encroachments of theirs upon his rectory of Westbury. These attacks are alike remarkable for their polished style, their pungent satire, and their telling humour. The *Confessio Goliae*,—a poem in which the hero is introduced making a mock confession of his three vices, the love of women, the love of dice, and the love of wine, and in which occur the lines, by the re-arrangement of which, at a much later period, was formed the capital bacchanalian song :

“Mihi est propositum, in tabernâ mori,” &c.

“I propose to end my days in a tavern drinking,” &c.

Mr. Wright does not seem disposed to attribute to our author, observing, that “there is no known circumstance connected with him which could authorise us to look upon him in any other light than as a learned and elegant scholar, a man of good sense, high character, and strict morality.”\* The term *golias*, it may be observed, was applied, in Mapes’ time, to indicate a person of *gulosity*, and reckless cynicism of manners and language.

## HUGH OF RUTLAND.

(Circa 1190.)

Hugh, a native of Rutland, but settled in Cornwall, at a place which M. De la Rue calls Credinhill, is the author of the romance of *Ipomedon*, a composition in Anglo-Norman, extending to more than 10,000 lines, and exhibiting ancient fable in a very strange me-

\* *Biographica Britannica Literaria* ii. 309.

disæval garb. Upon the completion of this romance, the author, "thinking it shameful to remain idle," set about the other romance with which his name is connected, the *History of Prolesilaus, Son Ipomedon*, a work extending to 11,000 lines.

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## PHILIP DE RAMES.

(Circa 1190.)

Philip de Rames, a *trouvère* in the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I., was a member of a wealthy Anglo-Norman family, having its seat in Suffolk or Norfolk. He is known to us as the author of two metrical romances: the first, entitled *La Manekine*, sets forth the persecutions of a daughter of a king of Hungary at the hands of a cruel mother-in-law in Scotland; the other, the romance of *Blanche of Oxford and Jehan of Dammartin*, is interesting as a highly graphic representation of the baronial manners of the period. *La Manekine* has been published by M. Michel (1840); the other romance by Le Roux de Lincy.

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## MAURICE DE CRAON.

(Died 1216.)

Maurice de Craon, an Anglo-Norman, high in favour at the court of Henry II., and having large landed property in Surrey, is known to us as an Anglo-Norman poet. After filling various diplomatic appointments, Maurice de Craon died in 1216. His son Peter succeeded alike to his estates and to his song-writing. The productions of both father and son have been published by M. Trebutien (Caen, 1843).

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## RENAUD OF HOLLAND.

(Circa 1190.)

Renaud of Holland, in Lincolnshire, is noticeable here as the author of an Anglo-Norman love-song, which Mr. Wright has published in his *Anecdota Literaria*.

## SIMON DU FRESNE.

(Circa 1190.)

Simon du Fresne, a friend of Giraldu Cambrensis, and himself a canon of Hereford Cathedral, is the author of a French metrical abridgment of the *De Consolatione* of Boethius. He is also known to us as the writer of numerous Latin epigrams and short poems, chiefly in defence of Giraldu Cambrensis from the attacks of Adam Dore and other poetical antagonists.

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## NIGELLUS WIREKER.

(Circa 1190.)

Nigellus Wireker, a precentor of Canterbury Cathedral, was the intimate friend of William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, and aided his efforts to reform the monkery of the period, by various writings in Latin verse and prose, which enjoyed large popularity both at the time and in subsequent ages. His chief poetical work is the *Speculum Stultorum*, a satire in Latin elegiacs on the follies and corruptions of the time, and more especially upon the monastic orders. The hero, Brunellus, an ass—designed as a personification of the monks—being discontented with his evil condition and his short tail, goes forth in search of the better state and the longer appendage. After experiencing various misfortunes, he resolves to become a monk; for the purpose of selection, he reviews the several orders, but finds occasion to condemn them all, whereupon he proceeds to form the design of an entirely new order. He has made some way in his speculations on the subject, when he is seized upon by his old master, and compelled to return to servitude, his tail shorter than before, a portion of it having been lost in one of his misadventures.

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## GEOFFREY DE VINESAUF.

(Circa 1198.)

Geoffrey de Vinesauf (Galfridus Anglicus), an Englishman, who seems to have been engaged in the service of Henry II. and Richard I., is known to us as the author of a treatise, in Latin hexameters, on

the art of poetry. This *Nova Poetria*, as it is generally designated, a dull, wearisome poem,—“only interesting,” observes Mr. Wright, “as being the key to the general style of the Latin poetical writers of the 13th century, which was formed on the rules given in this work,—long enjoyed very considerable popularity.” The poem is dedicated to Pope Innocent III., in whose court the author was for some time resident as envoy from Richard I., who, we are informed by John, sub-prior of Bamborough (writing in 1483), desired to obtain the papal pardon for some fault he had committed. The work itself must, however, have been written after Richard’s death, that event being commemorated in it with a grief which in its vehemence assails even the day (Friday) on which the king deceased. It is to this exaggerated affliction of the poet that Chaucer thus humorously alludes :

“ O Ganfride, dere maister severain,  
That, whan thy worthy King Richard was slain  
With shot, complainedest his deth so sore,  
Why ne had I now thy science and thy lore,  
*The Friday for to chiden*, as did ye?  
(For on a Friday sothly slain was he);  
Than wold I shew you how that I coud plaine  
For Chaunticlere’s drede and for his paine.”

Several other works have been variously attributed to Geoffrey de Vinessauf; but the *Nova Poetria* would seem to be the only poem with which his name can be satisfactorily identified.

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## JOSEPH OF EXETER.

(Circa 1198.)

Joseph, surnamed Iscanus, from the place of his birth, Exeter, lived in the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I. He accompanied the latter monarch to Syria, probably in the capacity of minstrel, of which class of persons there were many in his army, whom he treated with profuse liberality. The great work by which Joseph is known (his *De Bello Trojano*) was finished when Henry II. was preparing for the Crusade, and may fairly be conceived to have recommended him to the favourable notice of the Lion-heart, who, a poet himself, and, moreover, above professional competition, was well disposed to encourage metrical merit, so long at least as it abstained from making himself the topic of any thing in the nature of satire or censure. *De Bello Trojano* is by far the finest of the mediæval Anglo-Latin poems, and approaches, indeed, so nearly to the excellences of the classic

ages, that when first printed (1541), and for several subsequent editions, it went under the name of *Cornelius Nepos*. The style, however, as Mr. Warton remarks, is a mixture of Ovid, Statius, and Claudian, who in Joseph's time were the most popular writers of antiquity. The diction is pure, the periods round, and the numbers harmonious. The subject is the fabulous history that was circulated in the middle ages under the name of Dares Phrygius. The other great work of Joseph of Exeter (his *Antiocheis*) is unhappily lost. The only portion of it that remains has been preserved to us by Camden. The date of Joseph's death is quite uncertain. Bale writes of him as *flourishing* in 1210.

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### GULIELMUS PEREGRINUS.

(Circa 1197.)

Tanner mentions as a poet of England one Gulielmus Peregrinus (William the Traveller), who accompanied Richard I. into the Holy Land, and sang his achievements there in a Latin poem, entitled *Odoeporicon Ricardi Regis*, dedicated to Herbert archbishop of Canterbury, and to Stephen Turnham, a captain in the expedition. He is called by Tanner "poeta per eam ætatem excellens."

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### ALEXANDER NECKAM.

(1157-1217.)

Alexander Neckam, called from his birth-place Alexander de Sancto Albano, was born at St. Alban's, September 1157; and his mother being honoured with the wet-nurseship of Richard I., who was born on the same night with himself, he became foster-brother of the Lion-heart. His tendencies, however, were quite in a different direction; he applied himself from early youth to learning, and with such success that, before he was out of his teens, he was intrusted with the school of Dunstable, and at twenty-three had become a distinguished professor in the University of Paris. On returning to England he conducted for a year his old school at Dunstable, and then, desirous of becoming a monk, applied to the Abbot of St. Alban's for admission in these terms: "Si vis, veniam; sin autem, non." The abbot, wishing to be as terse as his applicant, replied, punning upon his name, "Si bonus es, venias: si *nequam*, nequaquam;" whereupon Neckam withdrew in a huff and entered himself of the Augustine

monastery at Cirencester, of which, in 1213, he was elected abbot. He died in 1217, at Kemsey in Worcestershire, and was buried in Worcester Cathedral, punning pursuing him even to his epitaph, which ran thus :

“Eclipsim patitur sapientia, sol sepelitur ;  
Cui si par unus, minus esset flebile funus ;  
Vir bene disertus et in omni more facetus ;  
Dictus erat *nequam*, vitam duxit tamen *æquam*.”

Neckam, whose works embrace the whole circle of science, comes within our scope as one of the best Latin poets of his age. Mr. Wright, in his *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, gives an elaborate account of his grammatical and other productions, and large extracts from his chief poems.

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### WILLIAM THE TROUVÈRE.

(Circa 1197.)

William le Trouvère, as he is generally called, by himself inclusively, though he adds that his baptismal name was Adgar, was an Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastic in the reign of Henry II., who wrote a series of Miracles of the Virgin and Saints' Legends, in Anglo-Norman verse. Among them is the *Legend of Theophilus*, which was very popular in the middle ages.

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### MAURICE OF WALES.

(Circa 1197.)

Maurice, a Welshman, and a friend of Giraldus Cambrensis, by whom he is highly eulogised, is the author, according to Bale, of *Epigrammata quædam*, and of *Carmina et Epistolæ*.

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### MAURICE OF FORDE.

(Circa 1197.)

Maurice, a monk of Forde Abbey in Somersetshire, is the author of a poem *De Schemate Pontificali*, and of a book of *Carmina*.

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### JOHN DE ST. OMER.

(Circa 1197.)

John de St. Omer was a native of Norfolk, and a member of some monastic order. He is the author of a work entitled *Norfolchiæ*



*descriptionis Impugnatio*, which is an answer, in rhyming verse, to a bitter satire upon Norfolk, written by a monk of Peterborough, under the title of *Descriptio Norfolciensium*.

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#### ADAM OF DORE.

(Circa 1197.)

Adam, abbot of Dore, near Hereford, wrote a metrical defence of the monastic orders against Giraldus Cambrensis. Bale also mentions under his name a *Rudimenta Musices*.

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#### ROBERT DE BEAUFEEY.

(Circa 1197.)

Robert de Beaufey (Robertus de Bellofoco, Robertus de Bellofago) was a canon of Salisbury, who wrote an *Encomium Topographiæ*, in honour of his friend Giraldus Cambrensis' *Topographia Hiberniæ*; and a *Carmen de commendatione Cerevisiæ*, in honour of ale.

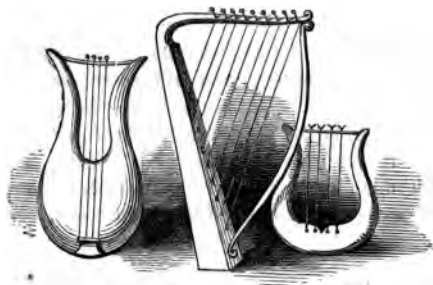
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#### LAYAMON.

(Circa 1197.)

While Norman literature was making a rapid progress in this country, under the fostering influence of royal patronage, and the Latin compositions of John of Salisbury, Joseph of Exeter, and others, bore testimony to the no less powerful encouragement of the Church, the Saxon language, however degraded, still continued to maintain its ground, as generally spoken, and even employed in works of information and amusement, for at least a century after the Norman Conquest. This is incontestably proved, not only by the *Saxon Chronicle*,—which, as it relates the death of King Stephen, must have been written after that event,—but by a much more curious composition, Wace's *Brut*, or *Chronicles of Britain*, by Layamon, a “priest of Erneleye-upon-Severn,” as he calls himself, which circumstances probably indicate to have been completed somewhere in the reign of Richard I. The *Brut* itself is a French metrical version of the history of Britain, from the time of the imaginary Brutus to the reign of Cadwallader, A.D. 689, which Geoffrey of Monmouth had previously translated into Latin prose, from the British original imported from Britany by Walker, archdeacon of Oxford. The language of Laya-

mon's version (writes Ellis), as it does not contain any word which we are under the necessity of referring to a French origin, we may consider as simple and unmixed, though very barbarous Saxon; but, at the same time, the orthography of the manuscript,\* in which we see, for the first time, the admission of the soft *g* together with the Saxon *z*, as well as some other peculiarities, seems to prove that the pronunciation of our language had already undergone a considerable change. Indeed, the whole style of this composition, which is broken into a series of short unconnected sentences, and in which the construction is as plain and artless as possible, and perfectly free from inversions, seems to indicate that little more than the substitution of a few French for the existing Saxon words were now necessary to produce an exact resemblance with that Anglo-Norman, or English, of which we possess a few specimens, supposed to have been written in the early part of the 13th century.



SAXON HARPS.

## NICHOLAS DE GUILDFORD.

(Circa 1197.)

Nicholas de Guildford, born at Guildford in Surrey, and a judge, settled at Portisham in Dorsetshire, is supposed to be the author of an English poem entitled *The Owl and the Nightingale*, a passage in which would appear to fix the period of its composition in the reign of Richard I. The poem has been edited for the Percy Society by Mr. Wright.

\* The work is happily now no longer confined to manuscript, having been published (1847), with a literal translation, notes, and glossary, by Sir Frederick Madden.

## O R M E.

(Circa 1210.)

The earliest successor of Layamon, as an English poet, was one Orme, or Ormin, an Augustine monk in the north of England, who wrote a harmony of the Gospels, under the title of *Ormulum*, in verses of fifteen syllables, without rhyme, in imitation of the most common form of the Latin tetrameter iambic. Selections from this work are given by Mr. Thorpe in his *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*; but Mr. Wright considers that the work ought to be presented entire, as a most interesting and important monument of the history of our language.

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## JOHN GARLAND.

(Circa 1210.)

John Garland, better known as Johannes de Garlandia, was an English poet and grammarian, who studied at Paris about the year 1210. The most eminent of his numerous Latin poems, which crowd our libraries, seem to be his Epithalamium on the Virgin Mary, in ten books of elegiacs; and his *De Triumphis Ecclesiæ*, in eight books, which contain much English history. These both remain in manuscript; but others of his pieces, both in prose and verse, have been printed.

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## MICHAEL, THE CORNISH POET.

(Circa 1216.)

Michael, surnamed the Cornish poet, was a notable rhymers in Latin verse in the time of King John and Henry III., out of whose *Rhymes for Merry England*, as Camden calls them, several passages are quoted by that author in his *Remains*.

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## Y PRYDYDD BYCHAN.

(Circa 1230.)

Y Prydydd Bychan, "the little poet," contributed twenty-one poems to the metrical literature of Wales. His chief poem is an englynion addressed to Prince Owen the Red, son of Gruffyd ap Llywelyn.

## DANIEL ELINGHAM.

(Circa 1230.)

Daniel Elingham was a Benedictine monk of Linton, about the time of Henry III., mentioned among the Latin rhymers of that period by Camden, who quotes his verses upon John the Baptist, painted in a white-friar's weed, in the White-Friars' church in Nottingham.

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## ENNION AP MADAWG AP RHAHAWD.

(Circa 1250.)

Enion ap Madawc ap Rhahawd is the author of an ode to Prince Gruffyd, eldest son of Llywelyn the Great. "The poem," writes Mr. Stephens, "has merit, and strikingly portrays the prevalent sentiments of the Kymry at a time when the armies of England, scouring over the plains, frequently compelled them to fall back upon those palladia of Cambrian liberty, their mountain fastnesses. Our early literature breathes not a word of despair, not a hint at compromise, not a thought of submission; on the contrary, the national spirit, gaining strength from adversity, kept pace with the occasion, and mounted highest when the danger was greatest. There is throughout the Welsh poems of this period fierce defiance of the Saxons and Normans, or 'French,' as they are called, and vehement exultation in successes, however small."\*

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## BLEDDYN VARD D.

(Circa 1250.)

Bleddyn Vardd (Bleddyn the poet) was a Welshman of the thirteenth century, who wrote thirteen short poems, among which are an elegy on Llywelyn ap Gruffyd, two eulogies of his younger brother, and an elegy on the three brothers Owain, Llywelyn, and David. All these poems are characterised by a certain degree of merit, and have much historical value; the portrait of Llywelyn, most elaborately rendered, and with every indication of truthfulness, represents to us this last prince of Wales as a man of high merit in every respect.

\* *Stephens' Literature of the Kymry.*

## HYWEL VOEL.

(Circa 1250.)

Hywel Voel, a Welshman of Irish extraction, wrote, among other things, a spirited remonstrance in verse against the imprisonment of Owain ap Gruffyd by his brother, Llywelyn ap Gruffyd.

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## JOHANNES CANONICUS.

(Circa 1250.)

Johannes, surnamed from his order, Canonicus, an Englishman, was author of a book of Latin poems, mentioned by Bale, in the reign of Henry III.

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## ROBERT MANNING, OR DE BRUNNE.

(Born circa 1265.)

Robert Manning, born before 1270, at Brunne (Bourne) in Lincolnshire, and graduated at Cambridge, was a Gilbertine canon, first for fifteen years in the priory of Semperingham, Lincolnshire, and then in the priory of Sixhill, in the same county. His first work was a metrical paraphrase of William de Wordington's *Manuel Peché* (Manual of Sins), a treatise on the Decalogue and on the seven deadly sins, illustrated with many legendary stories and moral precepts, whose store is largely augmented by the zealous English translator. Wordington's work is itself supposed to have been a free version of a Latin poem called *Floretus*, by some ascribed to St. Bernard, and by others to Pope Clement. This production, which, from the preface, Robert de Brunne designed to be sung to the harp at public entertainments, and which was written, or begun, in the year 1303, has never been printed; but there are manuscript copies of it in the Bodleian Library and in the British Museum. Our author's second and more important work is a metrical chronicle of England, in two parts, the first of which, to William Rufus, is translated from Wace's *Brut d'Angleterre*, as continued by Geoffroi Gaimar; and the second from a French chronicle, written by Peter de Langtoft, an Augustine canon of Bridlington in Yorkshire, who is supposed to have died in the reign of Edward II., and was therefore contemporary with his translator. Mr. Hearne, in his edition of Robert de Brunne's works, has suppressed the whole of the first portion of this poem, except the prologue and a few extracts, which he

found necessary to illustrate his glossary. The learned antiquary perhaps thought, that having carefully preserved the whole of Robert of Gloucester's faithful and almost literal version of Geoffrey of Mon-



MINSTRELS.

mouth, it was unnecessary to print the paraphrase that had passed through the medium of a Norman poet. The second portion, as edited by Hearne, was printed in 1725, under the title of *Peter Langtoft's Chronicle*.

Mr. Warton assigns to Robert de Brunne the metrical translation of Bishop Grossetête's *Templum Domini*, under the title of the *Castel of Love*; but the internal evidence is against the supposition. Hearne, with as little reason, ascribed to him the metrical English romance of *Richard Cœur de Lion*. He was, upon the whole, an industrious, and certainly, for the time, an elegant writer; and his extraordinary facility of rhyming (a talent, indeed, in which he has been seldom surpassed) must have rendered his work a useful study to succeeding versifiers.

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## ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER.

*(Circa 1290.)*

Robert of Gloucester, whom his editor, Mr. Hearne, emphatically designates "the British Ennius," was a monk of the Abbey of Gloucester. He has left a poem of considerable length, consisting of a history of England in verse, from Brutus to the reign of Edward I., wherein the author has clothed the fables of Geoffrey of Monmouth in rhyme, which have often a more poetical air in Geoffrey's prose. The language is full of Saxonisms—an obscurity perhaps owing to the Western dialect, in whose atmosphere the writer lived. "It would be quite hopeless," says Mr. Ellis, "to attempt a defence of Robert of Gloucester's poetry as such; perhaps his own wish was merely to render more generally intelligible a body of history which he considered curious, and certainly believed to be authentic, because it was written in Latin, the language, as he deemed, of truth and religion. Addressing himself to his illiterate countrymen, he employed the vulgar language as he found it, without any attempt at embellishment or refinement; and perhaps wrote in rhyme only because it was found to be a useful help to the memory, and gave his work a chance of being recited in companies where it could not be read. The latter part of his poem, in which he relates the events of his own time, will not appear quite uninteresting to those who prefer the simple and desultory narratives of contemporary writers to the philosophical abridgments of the moderns; and a great part of his obscurity will be found to result from that unnecessary mixture of black letter with the Saxon characters, in which Mr. Hearne, from his inordinate appetite for antiquity, has thought proper to dress this ancient English author."

Robert of Gloucester, though cold and prosaic, is not quite deficient in the valuable talent of arresting the attention; and the orations, with which he occasionally diversifies the thread of his story, are in general appropriate and dramatic, and not only prove his good sense, but exhibit no unfavourable specimens of his eloquence. In his description of the first Crusade he seems to change his usual character, and becomes not only entertaining but even animated; and the vision, in which "a holy man" is ordered to reproach the Christians with their departure from their duty, and at the same time to promise them the divine intervention to extricate them from a situation in which the exertions of human valour were apparently fruitless, would not perhaps, to contemporary readers, appear less poetical, or less sublime and impressive, than the introduction of the heathen mythology into the works of early classics.

## JOHN BLAIR.

(Circa 1300.)

John Blair, or Blare, chaplain to Sir William Wallace, is the author of the metrical poem entitled *Gesta Willemi Wallas*, from which Blind Harry's *Actes and Deedes of the moste famous Champion, Sir William Wallace*, was translated. He has left another Latin poem, *De Liberata Tyrannide Scotia*. In his Life of Wallace he appears to have been assisted by Thomas Gray, parson of Liberton.

## THOMAS LEARMOUNT OF ERCILDOUN.

(Died about 1300.)

Of the authors of the compositions which we now call metrical romances, and which by older writers are termed *gests* (from the Latin word *gesta*), Robert de Brunne expressly mentions two poets, Thomas and Kendal, as excelling in this mode of writing.\* In the story of *Sir Tristram*, he says that

“ Over gastes it has the esteem  
Over all that is or was,  
If men it said, as made Thomas.”

The bard who is thus distinguished from a crowd of competitors is supposed to have been Thomas Learmount, a name which Scotland formerly viewed with a reverence almost equal to that which Orpheus obtained in Greece, and who continued till a late period to be recognised in the combined character of prophet and poet. The talents and qualifications which procured him this distinction must certainly have been of no common kind; but of his real merits, it is to be feared, a correct estimate can scarcely now be formed.

The history of his life and writings is involved in utter obscurity. As to his name, in one charter he is called Thomas Rymor, but in others, of an earlier date, Thomas Learmount of Ercildoun: it was his poetical fame that procured him the denomination of the Rhymer, by which he is still known among the common people of Scotland.

He was the descendant of a respectable house; the principal family of his name was that of Esselment, and from this he is said to have derived his origin. He himself probably became the founder of a new family, taking its title from Ercildon, since Earlstoun, near Melrose. The period of his birth is unknown; but he had reached

\* Of Kendal nothing further appears to be known.



the zenith of his reputation about the year 1283, when occurred his prediction of the death of Alexander III., which confirmed the fame



THOMAS THE RHYMER'S TOWER.

of prophet to his name. *The whole Prophecies of Scotland, England, Ireland, France, and Denmark, prophesied by Thomas Rymer*, did not, however, appear in collective print until 1615.

Robert de Brunne, we have seen, commemorates him as the author, jointly with Thomas Kendal, of the romance of *Sir Tristram*, the exact position of which poem, however, whether original composition or translation, whether Scotch or English, has been matter of vehement controversy amongst the later critics. An admirable edition of the poem was given to the public by Sir Walter Scott. The metrical merit of *Sir Tristram* is not conspicuous, but it contains curious pictures of ancient manners, and, on this account alone, is a valuable acquisition to the general treasure of our literature.



## JOHANNES PECKAM.

(Circa 1270.)

Johannes Peckam, a Franciscan monk in the reign of Edward I., was the author of *Carmina Diversa* and many other poetical works enumerated by Bale.

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## LLYGAD GWYR.

(Circa 1270.)

Llygad Gwyr, a Welsh poet of the 13th century, is the author of a long *Ode to Llewelyn ap Gruffyd*, grandson of Llywelyn the Great. The production is of slight metrical merit; but it is useful as an historical document, the names of places, persons, and battles greatly facilitating the business of the historian.

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## GRUFFYD AP YR YNAD COCH.

(Circa 1282.)

Gruffyd ap yr Ynad Coch, the ablest Welsh bard of his day, is the author of a fine elegy on the death of Llywelyn the Great, the last king of Wales, killed in the battle of Builth by Sir Adam de Franc-ton, 10th Dec. 1282. It was after the death of Llywelyn that, according to the popular tradition, consecrated by Gray's thrilling ode, the victorious Edward I. ordered the Welsh bards to be all put to death. This ruthlessness on the part of the English monarch is indeed affirmed by Sir John Gwynne, in his *History of the Gwydyr Family*; but the statement is unsupported by a single contemporary historian. Edward, indeed, found it necessary, on the submission of the Welsh, to issue an edict, "that the westours, bards, rhymers, and other idlers and vagabonds, who lived upon the gifts called *Cymmortha*, be not supported nor sanctioned in the country, lest, by their invectives and lies, they lead the people to mischief, and harden the common folk with their impositions:" but this edict was certainly not directed against the "respectable" bards, nor were any bards at all killed by the English king, except those who, being, as many of them were, warriors also, fell in battle against their country's foe.

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## WILLIAM LANGLAND.

(Circa 1300.)

William Langland was born at Shipton-under-Whichwood, Shropshire, somewhere about the year 1300, and became a secular priest, and fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. The work for which his name is famous is the *Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman*, a poem containing a series of twenty distinct visions, which the author imagines himself to have seen while he was sleeping after a long ramble on Malvern Hills in Worcestershire. It is a satire on the vices of almost every profession, but particularly on the corruptions of the clergy and the absurdities of superstition. A dream is certainly the best excuse that can be offered for the introduction of allegorical personages, and for any incoherences that may result from the conduct of a dialogue carried on between such fanciful actors; and, it must be confessed, the writer has taken every advantage of a plan so comprehensive and convenient, and has dramatised his subject with great ingenuity. The work may be considered as a long moral and religious discourse, and as such is full of good sense and piety; but it is further rendered interesting by a succession of incidents, enlivened sometimes by strong satire, sometimes by the keenest ridicule. It is ornamented also by many fine specimens of descriptive poetry, in which the genius of the author appears to great advantage. But his most striking peculiarity is the structure of his versification, which is the subject of a very learned and ingenious essay in the second volume of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. His verses are not distinguished from prose, either by a determinate number of syllables or by rhyme, or indeed by any other apparent test, except the studied recurrence of the same letter three times in each line, a contrivance which we should not suspect of producing much harmony; but to which (as Crowley, the original editor of the poem, justly observes) even a modern ear will gradually become accustomed. This measure is referred by Dr. Percy to one of the 136 different kinds of metre which Wormius has discovered amongst the works of the Icelandic poets; but the principal difficulty is to account for its adoption in *Piers Plowman's Vision*.

Perhaps this alliterative metre, having become a favourite with the northern scalds during the interval which elapsed between the departure of the Anglo-Saxons from Scandinavia and the subsequent migration of the Danes, may have been introduced by the latter into those provinces of England where they established themselves; and being adopted by the numerous body of minstrels for which those

provinces were always distinguished, may have maintained a successful struggle against the Norman ornament of rhyme, which was universally cultivated by the poets of the south. Giraldus Cambrensis describes by the title of *annomination* what we now call *alliteration*, and informs us that it was highly fashionable among the English and even the Welsh poets of his time. That it effectually stood its ground in some parts of the kingdom during the reign of Edward III. and even long after, appears from the numerous imitations of Langland's style which are still preserved; and it is evident that a sensible and zealous writer in the cause of religion and morality was not likely to sacrifice those great objects, together with his own reputation, to the capricious wish of inventing a new, or of giving currency to an obsolete mode of versification.

An edition of *Piers Plowman*, edited by Dr. Whittaker, was published in 1813; but the later impression, produced under the care of Mr. Wright, may be estimated as the most valuable reproduction of this valuable work: for Langland's poem, whatever may be thought of its poetical merit, cannot fail to be considered an entertaining and useful commentary on the general histories of the 14th century, not only from its almost innumerable pictures of contemporary manners, but also from its connexion with the particular feelings and opinions of the time. The minds of men were then greatly incensed by the glaring contradictions that appeared between the professions and the actions of the two great orders of the state. The clergy of a religion founded on humility and self-denial united the most shameless profligacy of manners with the most inordinate magnificence. An armed aristocracy, who, by their oath of knighthood, were bound to the maintenance of order and to the protection of the helpless and unfortunate, were not satisfied with exercising in their own persons the most intolerable oppression on their vassals, but were the avowed protectors of the subordinate robbers and assassins who infested the roads, and almost annihilated the internal intercourse of every country in Europe. The people were driven to despair, flew to arms, and took a most frightful revenge on their oppressors. Various insurrections in Flanders, those of the Jacquerie in France, and those of Wat Tyler and others in England, were the immediate consequences of this despair; but the popular discontents had been in a great degree prepared and fomented by itinerant preachers, who inveighed against the luxury and crimes of the great, and maintained the inalienable rights and natural equality of man.

Langland's poem, addressed to popular readers, written in simple but energetic language, and admirably adapted, by its dramatic form and by the employment of allegorical personages, to suit the popular

taste, though it is free from these extravagant doctrines, breathes the pure spirit of Christianity, and inculcates the principles of rational liberty. This may have prepared the minds of men for those bolder tenets which for a series of years were productive only of national restlessness and misery, but which ultimately terminated in a free government and a reformed religion.

To the *Vision of Piers Plowman* has been commonly annexed a poem called *Piers the Plowman's Crede*, and which may be properly considered as its appendage. It is professedly written in imitation of the *Vision*, but by a different hand, and, from internal evidence, subsequent to 1384. The author, in the character of a plain, uninformed person, pretends to be ignorant of his creed, to be instructed in the articles of which, he applies by turns to the four orders of Mendicant Friars. This circumstance affords an obvious occasion of exposing in lively colours the tricks of these societies. Leaving them all with indignation, the inquirer finds an honest poor ploughman in the fields, and tells him how he has been disappointed by the four orders. The ploughman answers with a long invective against them. The *Crede*, the style of which is less embarrassed than that of the *Vision*, is printed with the latter poem in Mr. Wright's edition. There are several other satirical pieces anterior to the Revolution which bear the adopted name of Piers the Plowman. Under the character of a ploughman, the religious orders were likewise lashed in a poem written in apparent imitation of Langland's *Vision*, and attributed to Chaucer—*The Plowman's Tale*. The measure of this poem, indeed, is different, and it is in rhyme; but it has Langland's alliteration of initials, as if his example had, as it were, appropriated that mode of versification to the subject, and the supposed character which supports the satire.

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#### ADAM DAVIE.

(Circa 1312.)

With the exception of Robert Manning, although much poetry began to be written about the reign of Edward II., there seems only one English poet whose name has descended to posterity. This is Adam Davy or Davie, who may be placed about the year 1312. No circumstances of his life are known, other than that he was marshal of Stratford-le-Bow, near London. He has left several poems, never printed, which are almost as forgotten as his name. The only manuscript of these pieces now remaining, which seems to be coeval

with its author, is preserved in the Bodleian Library. It is much damaged, and on that account often illegible. The contents are,—“Visions,” the “Battell of Jerusalem,” the “Legend of Saint Alexius,” “Scripture Histories,” “Of Fifteen Toknes before the Day of Judgement,” and “Lamentations of Souls.”

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### THE HERMIT OF HAMPOLE.

(Died 1348.)

Richard Rolle, a hermit of the order of Augustine, and a doctor of divinity, lived a life of solitude near the nuns of Hampole, four miles from Doncaster in Yorkshire. He was a very popular and learned, though inelegant, writer in Latin on theological subjects. His pretensions to the character of an English poet are founded on a metrical paraphrase of the book of Job, another of the Lord's Prayer, seven Penitential Psalms, and a poem in seven parts, called “The Pricke of Conscience.” Mr. Warton, however, considers the latter poem a translation, by another hand, of a prose work by Hampole, entitled *Stimulus Conscientiæ*, and deems the hermit's lucubrations altogether so indifferent as to be unworthy even of extract. Mr. J. B. Yates, on the other hand, and Mr. W. J. Walter, warmly advocate the poetical claims of the recluse, and have printed copious analyses of the “Pricke of Conscience,” the former in the 19th vol. of *Archæologia*, the latter in a separate publication.

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### JOHN BARBOUR.

(1316-1396.)

The memoirs of John Barbour, or Barber, the contemporary, and in some respects the rival, of Chaucer, may be comprised within very narrow limits. He is supposed to have been born about the year 1316, at Aberdeen. He was educated for the clerical profession, and in 1357 we find him archdeacon of Aberdeen. During the same year the bishop of his diocese nominated him (13th August) one of the commissioners who were to meet at Edinburgh in order to deliberate concerning the ransom of their captive monarch, David II. Of this date also (13th September) there is extant a passport from Edward III., authorising him to conduct to Oxford three scholars to pursue their scholastic exercises there; and it is considered that he himself took

the occasion of this visit to enlarge his own knowledge in that great University. In 1365 (Oct. 16th) he was presented with another safe-conduct from King Edward, enabling him "to come into England, and to travel through the kingdom, with six horsemen, his companions, on their way to St. Denis (in France)." And again, (Nov. 1368) we read a passport "to Master John Barber, with two valets and two horses, to come into England, and travel through the same, to the other dominions of the king, to France, for the sake of study, and to return thence." We have no written document regarding Barbour from 1368 to 1373, in which latter year he appears on the list of auditors of the Scottish Exchequer. The great work, *The Bruce*—a metrical history of King Robert Bruce—which has per-



SEAL OF ROBERT BRUCE.

petuated his name, was completed, it is conjectured, in 1375, having been commenced some years before, at the instance of David II., who had uniformly evinced great favour towards Barbour, based on a high appreciation of his genius and learning. Probably as a reward for this production, Robert II. bestowed upon Barbour two pensions, one of 10*l.* Scots from the customs of Aberdeen, the other of 20*l.* from the rents or burrow-mails of the same city. The first pension was limited to the "life of Barbour," the second was accompanied with a grant of it "to his assignees whomsoever, although he should have assigned it in the way of mortification;" in which way we find the 20*l.* appropriated to the chapter of the cathedral church of Aberdeen, on the condition that "said chapter shall annually for ever solemnly celebrate, once in the year, an anniversary (mass) for the soul of the said umquhile John." This appropriation, at the time of the Reformation, reverted to the crown. Barbour died in November or December 1396,

Barber's poetical character cannot be more correctly described than in the words of his editor, Pinkerton. "Here the reader will find few of the graces of fine poetry, little of the Attic dress of the Muse; but here are life, and spirit, and ease, and plain sense, and pictures of real manners, and perpetual incident and entertainment. The language is remarkably good for the time, and far superior in neatness and elegance even to that of Gawin Douglas, who wrote more than a century afterwards."

Pinkerton speaks of *The Bruce* as Barbour's "only poem;" but from several passages in Wyntoun's Chronicle, it appears undeniable that Barbour wrote another metrical work, which he seems to have denominated *The Brute*, as containing the genealogical history of the kings of Scotland from the fabulous Brutus downwards. Of this work no manuscript is known to be extant.

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#### ROBERT BASTON.

(Circa 1320.)

Edward II. is said to have carried with him to the siege of Stirling Castle a poet named Robert Baston. He was a Carmelite friar of Scarborough; and the king intended that Baston, as an eye-witness, should celebrate his conquest of Scotland in verse. The court bard, however, was himself taken prisoner by the Scotch, and compelled by them to write a panegyric, for his ransom, on Robert Bruce. This was probably in English. He is described by Bale as the author of *Poemata et Rythmi, Tragædiæ et Comædiæ vulgares*; but his only poem now extant, an account of the siege of Stirling Castle, is written in monkish Latin hexameters. It is not easy to understand what Bale meant by "*tragædiæ et comædiæ*," for the words do not always imply scenic representations. It appears, indeed, that before the reign of Edward II. many scriptural histories, in dialogue, were exhibited in our churches, under the name of mysteries or miracles, but these dialogues were not poems; on the other hand, many poems were written about this period, under the name of tragedies and comedies, but these poems were not in dialogue.

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#### GWILYM DDU.

(Circa 1322.)

Gwilym Ddu, a Welsh bard of the 14th century, is the author of two odes addressed to the patriotic Sir Gruffydd Llwyd, who was



imprisoned by Edward II. for an attempt to emancipate Wales from English rule. One of these poems is entitled *Odes of the Months*, by which quaint designation the author meant to convey, that when all nature revives, and the whole animal and vegetable kingdom are in their full bloom and vigour, he mourned and pined for the decayed state of his country. Mr. Evans considers this poem a monument at once of its hero's bravery and of its author's genius. Mr. Stephens, while controverting the metrical merit of the production, concedes to it a certain historical value, as a picture of the state of the country at the time.

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JOHN GOWER.

(1326-1408.)

The materials for a life of John Gower, "ancient Gower," are extremely scanty. The ascertained circumstance that, after leaving Merton College, Oxford, he was educated at one of the inns of court, proves him to have been of good birth; for at that time none but "gentlemen of arms and blood," and moreover of fortune, were admitted to that distinction. Stow, indeed, expressly calls him an esquire; and indeed there is, upon the whole, the best evidence that he was a member of the knightly family of Gower, then settled

at Stittenham in Yorkshire, and now represented by the ducal house of Sutherland. Bale makes him *eques auratus* and *poeta laureatus*; but Winstanley says that he was neither laureated nor hederated, but only rosated, in having a chaplet of four roses about his head on his monumental stone. As to the laureateship, he certainly did not fill that office, for the first English laureate on record is John Kaye, in the time of Edward IV.

It is probable that Gower's earliest compositions were his French ballads, of which fifty are still preserved in a folio Ms., formerly belonging to Fairfax, Cromwell's general, and since in the library of the late Marquess of Stafford, by whom they were communicated to Mr. Warton. These juvenile productions are more poetical and more elegant than any of his subsequent compositions in his native language; they would perhaps not suffer by a comparison with the best contemporary sonnets written by professed French poets; at all events, they shew extraordinary proficiency in a foreigner.

The three principal works of our author, however, are the *Speculum Meditantis*, the *Vox Clamantis*, and the *Confessio Amantis*, which are represented by the three volumes on his tomb. The first of these is a treatise in French-verse, which displays the general nature of virtue and vice, and describes the path which the reprobate ought to pursue for the recovery of the divine grace. The work has never been printed. The *Vox Clamantis*, or the *Voice of one crying in the Wilderness*, which also remains in manuscript, contains seven books of Latin elegiacs. This work is chiefly historical, and is little more than a metrical chronicle of the insurrection of the Commons under King Richard II. The best and most beautiful manuscript of it is in the library of All Souls College, at Oxford, with a dedication in Latin verse, addressed by the author, when he was old and blind, to Archbishop Arundel. The *Confessio Amantis*, or the *Lover's Confession*, which was printed by Caxton in 1483, and afterwards by Berthellet in 1532 and 1554, appears to have been written at the command of Richard II., who having met our poet rowing on the Thames near London, invited him into the royal barge, and after much conversation, requested him to "book some new thing." The poem thus commanded is a long dialogue between a lover and his confessor, who is a priest of Venus, and is called Genius. As every vice is in its nature unamiable, it ought to follow that immorality is inevitably punished by the indignation of the fair sex; and that every fortunate lover must of necessity be a good man and a good Christian; and upon this presumption, which, perhaps, is not strictly warranted by experience, the confessor passes in review all the defects of the human character, and carefully scrutinises the heart of

his penitent with respect to each, before he will consent to give him absolution.

Because example is more impressive than precept, he illustrates his injunctions by a series of apposite tales, with the morality of which our lover professes to be highly edified; and being of a more inquisitive turn than lovers usually are, or perhaps hoping to subdue his mistress by directing against her the whole artillery of science, he gives his confessor an opportunity of incidentally instructing him in chemistry, and in the Aristotelian philosophy. At length, all the interest that he has endeavoured to excite, by the long and minute details of his sufferings, and by manifold proofs of his patience, is rather abruptly and unexpectedly extinguished; for he tells us, not that his mistress is inflexible or faithless, but that he has arrived at such a good old age, that the submission of his fair enemy would not have been sufficient for insuring his triumph.

Through this elaborate work, Gower appears to have distributed all the contents of his commonplace-book; and Mr. Warton has traced back many of these fragments to the obscure sources from whence they were derived.

Chaucer, who knew and loved our poet, has comprised his character in a single epithet; and every reader must concur in the judgment of this great contemporary critic. While he is satisfied with being "the moral Gower," he always appears to advantage; he is wise, impressive, and sometimes almost sublime. The good sense and benevolence of his precepts, the solemnity with which they are enforced, and the variety of learning by which they are illustrated, make us forget that he is preaching in masquerade, and that our excellent instructor is a priest of Venus. But his narrative is often quite petrifying; and when we read in his work the tales with which we have been familiarised in the poems of Ovid, we feel a mixture of surprise and despair at the perverse industry employed in removing every detail on which the imagination had been accustomed to fasten.

It does not precisely appear what was the course of Gower's worldly life; he is said by some biographers to have prosecuted the law with such diligence and success, that he became very eminent in the profession. Leland makes mention, indeed, of a Sir John Gower, a retired judge of the Common Pleas, whom he identifies with the poet; but this Sir John Gower seems to have lived in the reign of Edward II. As Chaucer was an adherent of John of Gaunt, so was Gower attached to Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, another of Richard II.'s uncles, and not improbably in the character of counsel, or chancellor, each prince of the blood royal having at

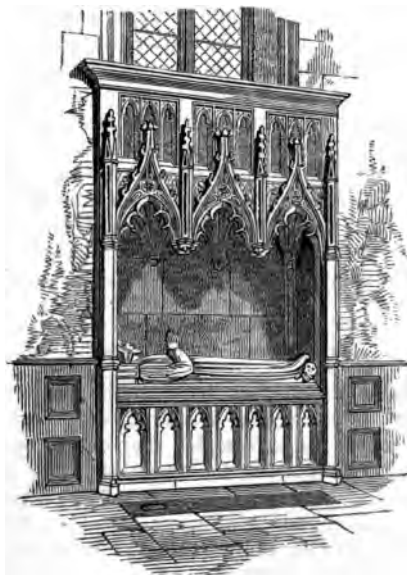
that period, equally with the sovereign, his own counsel learned in the law, who formed part of his household, and who defended his interests in Parliament or elsewhere, against any bills or other measures tending to injure them. The attachment of Gower to this prince has been alleged in extenuation of his conduct towards the fallen king, Richard II. (by whose order, it was said, the Duke had been murdered at Calais), and his flattery of the usurping monarch, Henry IV. Whatever his motive for conciliating the favour of the new king, that favour was destined to be of no very effective aid to him, for he became blind and almost helpless in the first year of Henry IV. (1399), as he himself tells us in his valediction to the Muses, entitled, *Curmen de Pacis Commendatione in laudem Henrici Quarti*, though it was not till 1408 that he actually ceased to exist, at the age of 74. One of the most pleasant associations we have with the memory of Gower is the lifelong attachment between him and Chaucer. Gower, indeed, claims to have been the master of Chaucer :

“Grete well Chaucer when ye meete,  
As my disciple and my poete;”

but there is little resemblance between the fine original verse of Chaucer and the gentle rhymes of the amiable Gower. They were both members of the Inner Temple; they drank together in amity at the fountains of Justice and the Muses, and wore out their age in friendship. It appears from Gower's will (of which probate of administration was signed in favour of Agnes, his widow, 24th Oct. 1408), that he died rich. He leaves 100*l.* (a large sum in those days), all his valuable goods, and the rents arising from his manors of Southwell, Wales, and of Multon, Suffolk, to his widow; besides bequests to the prior, sub-prior, canons, and servants of St. Mary Overies, to the four parochial churches and their incumbents in Southwark, and to several hospitals.

We know also that the chapel of St. John, in the Church of the Convent of St. Mary Overies, in Southwark, which had been reduced almost to ruins by a fire in the thirteenth century, was sumptuously reconstructed by him, almost at his sole cost; he founded, moreover, a chantry there, and endowed it with a mass daily to be said for him, and an obit to be performed the day after the feast of St. Gregory. In this chapel “he prepared for his bones a resting, and there, somewhat after the old fashion, he lieth right sumptuously buried, with a garland on his head, in token that he in his life-daies flourished freshly in literature and science.” The image of stone on his tomb represented the poet with long auburn hair, reaching to his shoulders and curling up, a small curled beard, and on his head a chaplet

of red roses (Leland says there was a "wreath of joy" interspersed with the roses); the robe was of green damask reaching down to the feet; a collar of SS, in gold colour, worn round the neck; and under his head, effigies of the three chief books he had compiled,



GOWER'S TOMB.

the *Speculum Meditantis*, the *Vox Clamantis*, and the *Confessio Amantis*. On the wall were painted three virtues, Charity, Mercy, and Pity, with crowns on their heads, and with each her device in her hand. That of Charity ran thus :

“ En toy qui es fils de Dieu le pere,  
Sauve soit qui gist sous ceste pierre.”

That of Mercy thus :

“ O bone Jesu, fais la mercie  
A l'ame dont le corps gist icy !”

That of Pity thus :

“ Par ta pitie, Jesu regarde,  
Et mets cest alme en sauve garde.”

Near these was a tablet with this inscription : " Whoso prayeth for the soul of John Gower, so oft as he does it, shall have m<sup>d</sup>. days of pardon." The epitaph runs thus :

" Armigeri scutum nihil a modo fert sibi lutum,  
Reddidit immolatum, morti generale tributum  
Spiritus exutum se gaudeat esse solutum,  
Et ubi virtutum regnum sine labe statutum."

Gower's wife was buried near him.

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GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

(1323-1400.)

Geoffrey Chaucer, the son of Thomas Chaucer, a merchant of London, was born in that city in the year 1328. His family is traced back by Thynne to the Roll of Battle Abbey. Of his early education we have no record, but we may infer it to have been of a liberal character. A passage in his *Court of Love*, written at the age of eighteen, wherein he designates himself "Philogenet of Cambridge,"

has been supposed to indicate that his later studies were pursued at that university. Hence, according to Anthony à Wood, he removed to Oxford, and was for some time a pupil of Wickliffe, then warden of Canterbury College, and who may be fairly conceived to have at this time infused into his mind those reforming doctrines which afterwards he openly embraced and vindicated. Leland, who confirms the statement of Chaucer's removal to Oxford, informs us that "after a considerable stay there, and a strict application to the public lectures of the university, he became a ready logician, a smooth rhetorician, a pleasant poet, a great philosopher, an ingenious mathematician, and a holy divine. That he was a great master in astronomy (adds Leland), is plain by his discourses of the *Astrolabe*; that he was versed in hermetic philosophy (which prevailed much at that time), appears by his tale of the *Canon's Yeoman*; his knowledge in divinity is evident from his *Parson's Tale*; and his philosophy from the *Testament of Love*." His studies were completed at Paris, where he attained that mastery of the French language which is so conspicuously manifest in his writings. It is presumed, that on his return to England he was entered of the Inner Temple, because the records of that inn are said to register that he was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscan friar in Fleet-street.

By what means, or at what precise period, he recommended himself to his patron, John of Gaunt, whose persevering kindness seems to have accompanied him through life, is not known; but it results from many passages in his earlier poems, that he enjoyed the familiar confidence of that prince during his courtship of Blanche, the heiress of the house of Lancaster; and that certainly in 1358, if not before, he occupied a small house belonging to his patron, contiguous to the park-gate of Woodstock palace.\* In the autumn of 1359, we learn from his own testimony, he performed his first military service, in attendance upon the prince in the army which Edward III. led into France, and the operations of which were terminated by the peace of Bretigni; Chaucer himself having meantime (at the siege of Retters, in 1359,) fallen a prisoner into the hands of the French, who probably released him on the conclusion of hostilities. It may be taken for granted that already the rising poet had been introduced by John of Gaunt to his father, Edward

\* Chaucer's house was a quadrangular stone mansion, commanding a view of the ancient magnificent royal palace, and of many beautiful scenes in the adjacent park. The last remains, chiefly consisting of what was called Chaucer's bedchamber, with an old carved oaken roof, were demolished about fifteen years ago. Among the ruins they found an ancient gold coin (a florin) of the city of Florence.—WARTON.

III. ; a discerning not less than a fortunate monarch, who had a taste as well for erudition as for arms, was an encourager of men of talent, and permitted them to approach him without reserve. How well qualified Chaucer was to shine and to succeed in that brilliant court, whoever has read his works will be at no loss to determine. Besides the advantages of his wit and his learning, he possessed those of person in no ordinary degree. His complexion was fair, his features fine, his lips red and full, his form of just proportions, his air refined and graceful; so that he united whatever could claim the approbation of the great, and charm the eyes of beauty. The first actual record, however, establishing his position in the royal favour, appertains to the year 1367, when a patent occurs by which the king grants to Chaucer an annuity of twenty marks, by the title of *Valettus noster*; an office which, by whatever name we translate it, might be held even by persons of the highest rank, since the only science then in request among the nobility was that of etiquette, the knowledge of which was acquired, together with the habits of chivalry, by passing in gradation through the several quasi-menial offices about the court. Chaucer was at this time thirty-nine years of age, and did not acquire the rank of *scutifer*, shield-bearer or esquire, until five years later.

On 20th June, 1370, he was sent by the king to the Continent, on some business connected with the royal service, and which he evidently performed to the entire satisfaction of his sovereign. In the autumn of this year he married Philippa, the eldest daughter of Sir Payne Roet, king-at-arms of Guienne, and sister of that Lady Catherine who, as widow of Sir Hugh Swynford, afterwards married the Duke of Lancaster, and thus cemented the friendship already so long subsisting between her sister's poet-husband and her own princely consort. The marriage brought to Chaucer a pension of 100 shillings, which had in the preceding January been conferred on his new wife, in consideration of her services as *domicella*, or lady in waiting on Queen Philippa.

On the 12th November, 1372, our poet, now a *scutifer*, was appointed, with Sir John Pronan and John de Mari, to proceed as royal envoys to Genoa, and there to arrange the details of a factory, or commercial settlement, which the Genoese merchants desired to establish in one of the English ports. It was probably on this occasion, "when the work was done," that our poet "learned at Padua" the story of Patient Griselidis, from "the worthy clerk Francis Petrark;" learned it (we insist upon picturing) not from the Latin translation of Boccaccio's tale, which Petrarch had just made (June 1373), but from the very lips, and in the very vernacular of



the eloquent Arezzian, who, at the age of seventy, was that very year residing in Padua. It is clear that, in the negotiation upon which he had been commissioned to Italy, Chaucer acquitted himself to his royal employer's satisfaction; for, from this time forth, we find him distinguished by repeated marks of the king's favour.

In April 1374 he received a grant for life of a gallon of wine daily; and in the following June was appointed to the office of comptroller of the customs and subsidy of wools, skins, and tanned hides in the port of London, a post of considerable emolument. Further, in November 1374, the king granted him the wardship of Sir Edmund Staplegate's heir, by which he realised 104*l.*; in the year following a quantity of forfeited wool, to the value of 71*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* In the last year of this reign he was twice diplomatically employed; first on a mission to Flanders, and next, in company with Sir Guichard D'Angle and Sir Richard Sturry, on a mission to France, to negotiate a marriage between Richard Prince of Wales and the daughter of the French monarch.

Chaucer himself speaks of this as a period when he was possessed of considerable opulence; and it will appear by a review of the several grants just mentioned, that he had great reason to be satisfied with the munificence of his royal master. The mark of silver in which these grants are estimated contained eight ounces, and consequently was equal to 40*s.*, as the pound was to 4*l.* of our present denomination; and as the representative value of silver is generally supposed to have been five times greater in the reign of Edward III. than it is at present, it will follow that the value of the mark in our current money may be estimated at 10*l.*, and Chaucer's original annuity at 200*l.* The grant of wine was of the same value, because it was afterwards exchanged for an annuity of twenty marks. The two gratifications in money, amounting together to 175*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.*, were, upon the same principles of calculation, equivalent to 3500*l.*; so that Chaucer appears to have received during the three last years of this reign a sum equal to the present value of 4700*l.* (including the two annuities), without taking into account his receipts as comptroller of the customs, which were probably much greater, or his wife's pension, or the reward of his mission to France, which may be supposed to have been considerable.

Mr. Tyrwhitt is a little displeased with Edward III. for having exposed Chaucer's genius to the *petrifying* influence of custom-house accounts; but it is to be observed that Chaucer voluntarily exposed his poetical talents to quite equal risk, by composing a treatise on the astrolabe; that his mathematical skill was perhaps not very uselessly employed in unravelling the confusion of the public ac-

counts; that the task thus imposed on him was at least no mean compliment to his probity; and that, after all, it produced no fatal effect on his genius, if, as Mr. Tyrwhitt conjectures, it did not prevent him from writing his *Book of Fame* during the intervals of his labour. Moreover, and above all, Chaucer, though a poet, and a great one, had need to live, and the means of comfortable subsistence thus secured to him were calculated to produce the very reverse effect of cramping his genius.

The earlier years of the succeeding reign were scarcely less propitious to the fortunes of Chaucer. The grant of his pension was confirmed to him, his daily measure of wine replaced by an equivalent annuity of twenty marks, and he himself re-appointed one of the king's *scutifers*. On the accession of Richard II. his diplomacy was called into requisition, in January 1378, on an embassy to France, for the negotiation of a marriage between the new English king and a daughter of the French monarch; and in May of the same year he was sent, with Sir Edward Berkeley, to Lombardy, to effect some military alliance between Bernardo Visconti, lord of Milan, Sir John Hawkwood, the famous condottiere, and the English king. It was on this occasion that Chaucer nominated, as one of his representatives, in case of any legal proceedings during his absence, John Gower; a circumstance, as Mr. Wright points out, establishing the fact of that intimate friendship between the poets, which there is every



CHAUCER—FROM THE HARLEIAN MS.

reason to believe remained unimpaired throughout their lives. Between May and December 1379, Chaucer was again absent on the diplomatic service of the state. In 1382 he was appointed comptroller of the petty customs of the port of London, in addition to his previous office of comptroller of the customs,—receiving, moreover, in 1385, the royal permission to perform both offices by deputy. In 1386 he was elected a knight of the shire for the county of Kent, in which he is believed to have held some property. The autumn of the same year in which he had attained this dignity witnessed the commencement of his decay. The influence of his great patron the Duke of Lancaster was for a time compelled to succumb to the tyrannical and designing ministers of Richard II.; the prince himself found it expedient to take refuge in Scotland; and Chaucer, with much difficulty, effected his escape beyond seas from the imprisonment, or worse, which befell many others of the duke's adherents. He abode for a time in Hainault, and then in France, whence, finding the king's ministers still resolute to get him into their hands, he fled to Zeeland. Several accomplices in the riot which had immediately occasioned his flight were with him, and he for a long time supported them in their exile. But his own means after a while failed him; those whom he had intrusted with the charge of his property in England (his two pensions had been, curiously enough, continued to him, though his offices had been bestowed on creatures of the minister) betrayed their trust, appropriated his rents, and absolutely refused to render any account whatever to one whom they deemed for ever an exile. Desperate at thus finding himself, with his wife and children—Thomas, aged thirteen, and Lewis, four—on the verge of destitution in a foreign land, while many of those whom, as fellow-exiles, he had supported, had returned and made their peace with the party in power, he at length chose rather to throw himself upon the laws of his country, than to perish abroad by hunger and oppression. He accordingly, in the autumn of 1386, returned to England, trusting perhaps that his heavy losses, and his sufferings during eighteen months of exile, might commend him to the compassion of his enemies. It was a vain hope: in December of the same year he was arrested by order of Thomas of Woodstock, and committed to the Tower. Here the court beset him alternately with promises of a return of royal favour if he would denounce his accomplices, and with the threat of immediate death if he refused compliance. He resisted threats and promises alike; but having been compelled, from utter poverty, in May 1388, to sell his two pensions, and finding his family menaced with starvation, and having undergone nothing but mere ingratitude and utter neglect from those for whose sake he and those

he loved were undergoing this living martyrdom, he at last made confession, and, according to the custom of trials at that time, offered to prove the truth of his statements by combat. "Fortitude," observes Hazlitt on the occasion, "does not appear at any time to have been the distinguishing virtue of poets;" but admitting that, in the severer construction of his conduct, he may have manifested a want of fortitude in the matter, those who in his own time denounced him as a traitor to his cause were themselves the men who, by their base ingratitude and treachery, had galled him to reject them; and, with later judges, let the misery into which he and his family had fallen be accepted as some palliation of his fault. "Witlesse I am," he says, in the *Testament of Love*, "thoughtfull, sightlesse lokyng, enduring penaunce in this derk prisonne (the Tower), caitiffed from frendshippe and acquaintaunce, and forsaken of al that any worde dare speke. I had richesse suffisauntly to weive nede; I had dignitie to be reverenced in worship. Power methought that I had to kepe fro min enemies; and me semed to shine in glory of renome. Every of the joyes is turned into his contrarie. For richesse now have I povertie; for dignitie now am I emprisoned; instede of power, wretchednesse I suffre; and for glory of renome I am now despised and foulliche hated."

In his confinement the poet recollected his former pursuits, the cherished visions of his happier days, and became again an author; producing not only the *Testament of Love*, a prose composition in imitation of Boethius *De Consolatione*, but two short poems reprinted by Todd in his *Illustrations of Gower and Chaucer*, the one describing the visits of celestial comforters to him in his gloomy dungeon, the other an allegorical appeal for the assistance of Vere, earl of Oxford.

In 1389, on the return of the Duke of Lancaster to power, Chaucer's interest also revived; and after a long and bitter storm, the sun began to shine upon him with an evening ray. In July of that year he was appointed clerk of the works at the Tower, Westminster, Berkhamstead, Eltham, &c.; an office which he appears to have lost, or not improbably resigned, in 1391, though it is quite possible also that the Master Gidney, whose name appears in a record of the latter date, in connection with the office, may have been the deputy whom the king had permitted him to employ.

Having received from the king this permission to perform his official duties by deputy, he retired to the house at Woodstock, which he owed to the early kindness of his ducal patron, and whence, on the 12th March, 1391, he addresses his *Conclusions of the Astrolabe* to his son "littel Lowys." Here, too, in the year 1391, at the age of sixty-five, he commenced his great work the *Canterbury Tales*, partly new compositions, partly tales originally written, and perhaps

published, as separate poems. Happily has Akenside thus painted the poet in his retirement :

“ Such was old Chaucer, such the placid mien  
Of him who first with harmony inform’d  
The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt  
For many a cheerful day. These ancient walls  
Have often heard him while his legends blithe  
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles  
Of homely life, through each estate and age,  
The fashions and the follies of the world  
With cunning hand portraying. Though perchance  
From Blenheim’s towers, O stranger, thou art come,  
Glowing with Churchill’s trophies, yet in vain  
Dost thou applaud them, if thy breast be cold  
To him, this other hero, who in times  
Dark and untaught, began with charming verse  
To tame the rudeness of his native land.”

In 1394 Chaucer received from King Richard II. a grant of 20*l.* per annum ; and in 1397 he was presented, by the munificence of his enduring friend the Duke of Lancaster, with the castle of Donnington in Berkshire, where he spent a considerable portion of his last years. In Speght’s time there were standing in the park of the castle three fine oaks, which tradition reported to have been distinguished by Chaucer himself as respectively the King’s oak, the Duke’s oak, and Chaucer’s oak. In 1398, probably as a security against the effects of his losses at the time of his disgrace, he received a royal patent of protection for two years from arrest or prosecution. In the autumn of the same year he was presented with a grant of a pitcher of wine daily, to be delivered to him by his son Thomas, who that year held the office of chief butler to the king.\*

\* Thomas Chaucer had this office of chief butler confirmed to him for life by letters patent of Henry IV., in the second year of whose reign we find him speaker of the House of Commons, sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, and constable of Wallingford Castle and Knaresborough Castle for life. In the sixth year of the same reign he was sent ambassador to France. In the ninth of the same reign the Commons presented him their speaker, and again in the eleventh year. Soon after this, Queen Jane granted to him, for his good service, the manors of Woodstock, Handborough, and Wotton, during life ; and in the thirteenth year he was again presented speaker, as he was also in the second of Henry V. ; and much about that time he was sent by the king to treat of a marriage with Catherine, daughter of the Duke of Burgundy ; he was again sent ambassador to France, and passed through a great many public stations. He died at Ewelme, near Wallingford, in the year 1434. By his wife Maud, daughter and heiress of Sir John Burghersh, he had one daughter, Alice, who was thrice married : first to Sir John Philips ; then to Thomas

By Henry IV., within four days after his accession to the throne (3d Oct. 1399), our poet received not only the confirmation of all the grants he had enjoyed under the late king, but an additional pension of 40 marks. In December of the same year he obtained from the Abbot of Westminster a long lease of a house, which tradition places on the site of Henry VII.'s Chapel; and removing to this house from Donnington Castle, he died there, with perfect resignation and composure, in the 72d year of his age, on the 25th October, 1400. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, the first man so honoured for his genius; and the inscription over his grave was



CHAUCER'S TOMB.

placed there by the appropriate hand of Caxton. That inscription having become obliterated, Nicholas Brigham, himself a poet, erected in 1556, in a recess close to Chaucer's grave, a beautiful monument, still subsisting—its perfect renovation is now about to be effected by the admirers of the great bard—bearing the following inscription :

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Montacute, earl of Salisbury; and lastly to the famous William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk. Their son John had three sons, the second of whom, Edmund, forfeited his life to the crown for treason against Henry VII., by which means the estates possessed by Chaucer's family came to the crown. Of Chaucer's other son, Lewis, we have no other account than that he was a student at Merton College, Oxford, and pupil to Nicholas Strode.

M.S.

Qui fuit Anglorum vates ter maximus olim,  
 Galfridus Chaucer conditur hoc tumulo.  
 Annum si quæras Domini, si tempora vitæ,  
 Ecce notæ subsunt quæ tibi cuncta notant.  
 25 Octobris, 1400.

Erumnarum requies mors.

N. Brigham hos fecit Musarum nomine sumptus.  
 1556.

Urry thus describes the character of this great man : " As to his temper, he had a mixture of the gay, the modest, and the grave. His reading was deep and extensive, his judgment sound and discerning ; he was communicative of his knowledge, and ready to correct or pass over the faults of his contemporary writers. He knew how to judge of and excuse the slips of weaker capacities, and pitied rather than exposed the ignorance of that age. In one word, he was a great scholar, a pleasant wit, a candid critic, a sociable companion, a steadfast friend, a great philosopher, a temperate economist, and a pious Christian."

" Chaucer," writes Dr. Johnson, " may, perhaps, with great justice be styled the first of our versifiers who wrote poetically. He does not, however, appear to have deserved all the praise which he has received, or all the censure that he has suffered. Dryden, who mistakes genius for learning, and in confidence of his abilities ventured to write of what he had not examined, ascribes to Chaucer the first refinement of our numbers, the first production of easy and natural rhymes, and the improvement of our language by words borrowed from the more polished languages of the continent. Skinner, contrarily, blames him in harsh terms for having vitiated his native speech by *whole cart-loads* of foreign words. But he that reads the works of Gower will find smooth numbers and easy rhymes, of which Chaucer is supposed to have been the inventor, and the French words, good or bad, of which Chaucer is charged as the importer. Some innovation he might probably make, like others, in the infancy of our poetry, which the paucity of books does not allow us to discover with particular exactness ; but the works of Gower and Lydgate sufficiently evince that his diction was, in general, like that of his contemporaries. Some improvements he undoubtedly made, by the various dispositions of his rhymes, and by the mixture of different numbers, in which he seems to have been happy and judicious."

" With respect to Chaucer's language," observes Mr. Ellis, " it is impossible not to feel some disappointment at this cautious and doubtful opinion delivered by the author of our national dictionary. That Chaucer ' might *probably make some innovations*,' and that ' his

diction was, *in general*, like that of his contemporaries,' we should have conjectured without Dr. Johnson's assistance ; because a writer of genius and learning will be likely to make some innovations in a barbarous language, but in so doing will not choose to become quite unintelligible. From a critic so intimately acquainted with the mechanism of language, we should have expected to learn whether Chaucer had in any degree added to the precision of our English idiom by improvements of its syntax, or to its harmony by the introduction of more sonorous words ; or whether he was solely indebted, for the beauty and perspicuity of his style, to that happy selection of appropriate expressions which distinguishes every writer of original thinking and real genius.

" All Chaucer's immediate successors, those who studied him as their model, Hoccleve, Lydgate, King James I., &c., speak with rapture of the elegance and splendour of the diction : he is the 'flower of eloquence' 'superlatively eloquent ;' his words are 'the gold dew-drops of speech.' " Such exaggerated praise simply an enthusiastic, though perhaps absurd admiration ; and as these poets would probably attempt to imitate what they considered as eminently beautiful, it seems likely that an examination of their style must enable us to discover what they considered as the improvements introduced by Chaucer.

" Now the characteristics of our poetry during the 15th and 16th centuries are an exuberance of ornament and an affectation of latinity, neither of which peculiarities is to be found in Robert of Gloucester, Robert de Brunne, Langland, or in any of the poets anterior to Chaucer. This, therefore, may be supposed to be what Chaucer himself and his successors meant by what they called an ornate style, of which the following stanza, extracted from the *Court of Love*, is a curious specimen :

' Honour to thee, celestial and clear,  
Goddess of Love, and to thy *celsitude*,  
That givest us light, so far down from thy sphere,  
Piercing our heartes with thy *pulchritude* ;  
Comparison none of similitude  
May to thy grace be made in no degree,—  
That hast us set with love in unity.'

It is not meant that this is an example of Chaucer's usual style ; indeed, no poet is in general more free from pedantry ; but the attentive reader will find that, in the use of words of Latin derivation, most of which are common to the French and the Italian languages, he very generally prefers the inflection of the latter, either as thinking them more sonorous, or because they are nearer to the original ;



and that, in his descriptive poetry, he is very fond of multiplying his epithets, and of copying all the other peculiarities of the Italian poetry (from which his favourite metre is unquestionably derived), with a view of refining our numbers, and improving our language by words borrowed from the more polished languages of the continent."

With respect to his success in these endeavours, there has been a considerable difference of opinion; but he has been most admired by those who were the best qualified to appreciate this merit. Spenser, his warmest panegyrist, had studied him with very minute and particular attention; and though many readers will not concur with him in thinking that Chaucer's compositions are "the well of English undefil'd," they will admit that Spenser formed his judgment with due deliberation, and that he evinced the sincerity of his belief by trusting the success of his own poetical reputation to the same antiquated phraseology.

From a general review of all Chaucer's works, it will appear that he entertained a very mean opinion of his native language, and of the poets who employed it; and that he was, during a great part of his life, incessantly occupied in translating the works of the French, Italian, and Latin poets. His *Romaunt of the Rose* is a professed translation from William de Lorris and Jean de Meun; the long and beautiful romance of *Troilus and Creseide* is principally imitated from Boccaccio's *Filostrato*; the *Legend of Good Women* is a free translation from Ovid's *Epistles*, combined with histories of his heroines, derived from various chronicles; the *House of Fame* is a similar compilation; *Palamon and Arcite* is known to be an imitation of the *Theseide* of Boccaccio. On the whole, it may be doubted whether he thought himself sufficiently qualified to undertake an extensive original composition till he was past sixty years of age, at which time, as has been related, he formed and began to execute the plan of his *Canterbury Tales*.

This elaborate work was apparently intended to contain a delineation of all the prominent characters in society. These were to be sketched out in an introductory prologue, to be contrasted by characteristic dialogues, and probably to be engaged in incidents which should further develop their peculiarities and disposition; and as stories were absolutely necessary in every popular work, an appropriate tale was to be assigned to each of the pilgrims. It is not extraordinary that the remainder of Chaucer's life should have been insufficient for the completion of such a plan. What is actually executed can only be considered as a fragment; but imperfect as it is, it contains more information respecting the manners and customs of the 14th century than could be gleaned from the whole mass of contem-

porary writers, English or foreign. "Chaucer's vein of humour," Mr. Warton remarks, "although conspicuous in the *Canterbury Tales*, is chiefly displayed in the characters (described in the pro-



THE TABARD.

logue) with which they are introduced. In these his knowledge of the world availed him in a peculiar degree, and enabled him to give such an accurate picture of ancient manners as no contemporary nation has transmitted to posterity. It is here that we view the pursuits and employments, the customs and diversions, of our ancestors, copied from the life, and represented with equal truth and spirit by a judge of mankind whose penetration qualified him to discern their foibles and discriminating peculiarities, and by an artist who understood that proper selection of circumstances and those predominant characteristics which form a finished portrait. We are surprised to find, in so gross and ignorant an age, such talents for satire and for observation on life,—qualities which usually exert themselves at more civilised periods, when the improved state of society, by subtilising our speculations, and establishing uniform modes of behaviour, disposes mankind to study themselves, and renders deviations of conduct and singularities of character more immediately and necessarily the objects of censure and ridicule. These curious and valuable remains are specimens of Chaucer's native genius, unassisted and unalloyed. The figures are all British, and bear no suspicious signatures of classical, Italian, or French imitation. The characters of Theophrastus are not so lively, peculiar, and appropriated."

The best edition of the *Canterbury Tales* is that of Mr. Wright.

The happy and successful manner with which Chaucer, as well in his Prologue as in other parts of his work, attacked the abuses of the various fraternities of the Church, has obtained for him the rank of a religious reformer, and enrolled him among our ecclesiastical and theological writers. The historian of the martyrs, Fox, expatiates elaborately on the religious utility of Chaucer's works.

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### LAURENCE MINOT.

(Circa 1330.)

The name of Laurence Minot, a contemporary metrical commemorator of the wars of King Edward III., remained totally unknown until late in the past century, and was then discovered only by accident, the circumstances of which were curious enough. The compiler of the catalogue of the Cottonian manuscripts, printed at Oxford in 1696, had contented himself with describing the inestimable volume marked *Galba* E. IX., which contains some of the most precious relics of old English poetry, in these words: "Chaucer, exemplar emendate scriptum." Mr. Tyrwhitt, preparing his edition of Chaucer, naturally consulted this "exemplar emendate scriptum:" he found that it had nothing whatever to do with Chaucer; but his feeling was the reverse of disappointment, when, upon examining the manuscript (formerly the property of one Richard Chawfer, whose name, set forth at the beginning, had misled the catalogue-compiler), he found himself introduced to the acquaintance of a new poet, anterior perhaps to Chaucer in point of time, and not much his inferior in point of language. In consequence of this happy discovery, the name of Laurence Minot was first ushered into the literary world, by a note to Tyrwhitt's learned essay on the *Language and Versification of Chaucer*. It is tolerably clear from our author's dialect and orthography, that he was a native of one of the northern counties, where, probably in some monastery, the poems may be conjectured to have been written. The date of the latest event they celebrate (the capture of Guisnes Castle) is January 22, 1352, and there is internal evidence that the commemorative poem was written close upon the event. It is the opinion of Ritson—by no means, however, a reliable authority, for his prejudices and prepossessions were even more than a match for his judgment—that "in point of ease, harmony, and variety of versification, as well as general perspicuity of style, Laurence Minot is perhaps equal, if not superior, to any English poet before the sixteenth, or even, with very few exceptions, before the seventeenth century."

## JOHN CAPGRAVE.

(Circa 1338.)

John Capgrave, born at Lynn in Norfolk, and monk of St. Augustine's monastery at Canterbury, is known as the translator into English verse of a *Life of St. Catherine*, written originally in Greek by Athanasius, and rendered thence into Latin by a priest named Arreck. Sir Henry Spelman, in whose possession the work (now one of the Rawlinson Mss., No. 118) once was, gives this description of the nature of the poem, and of its author: "A preiste, which this author, John Capgrave, nameth Arreck, having heard much of St. Katherin, bestowed eighteen years to search out her life, and for that purpose spent twelve of them in Greece. At last, by direction of a vision in the days of Peter king of Cyprus and Pope Urban V., he digged up in Cyprus an old booke of that very matter, written by Athanasius, byshop of Alexandria (but whether he that made the creede or not the author doubteth), and hidden there 100 yeares before by Anylon FitzAmarack. Then did this Arreck compile her story into Latin; and then also did he make it into English verse, but leaving it unperfected, and in obscure rude English. Capgrave not only enlarged it, but refyned it to the phrase of his tyme, as himselfe testifyeth. This priest, as Capgrave also sheweth, died at Lynn, many yeares before his tyme." Capgrave was also the author of a *Commentary on Genesis*, dedicated by him to Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. The library of Oriel College, Oxford, possesses the author's original manuscript of this work. In the superb initial letter of the dedicatory epistle is a curious illumination of the author humbly presenting his book to his patron, the duke, who is seated and covered with a sort of hat. At the end is this entry in the handwriting of the Duke Humphrey: 'Cest livre est a moy, Humfrey due de Gloucestre, du don de frere Jehan Capgrave, quy le me fist presenter a mon manoyr de Pensherst le jour . . . de lan mccccxxviii.' This is one of the books which Humphrey gave to his new library at Oxford, destroyed or dispersed by the active reformers under young Edward.

## RHYS GOCH AP RHICCERT.

(Circa 1350.)

The distinctive character of Welsh poetry, during the last seventy years of the 14th century, writes Mr. Stephens, is love. Other subjects also occupied the attention of the bards; and the era is remark-

able for the variety of the topics embraced, as well as for the sweetness of the poems and the elegance of the versification; for the country being at peace, they were no longer compelled to dedicate their talents to the service of war, and were consequently allowed greater latitude in the selection of their subjects. But the fair sex quite monopolised the favour of the poets; and there is scarcely one of them who has not written amatory verses. We have two love-poems by Jorwerth Vychan; by Casnoden, one; by Gruffyd ap Meredydd, six; by Gronwy ap Davydd, three; by Gronwy Gyrriog, one; by Jorwerth Gyrriog, one; by Sevnyn, one; by Gronwy Ddu, one; by Mab y Clochyddyn, one; by Davydd ap Gwilym, the Cambrian Petrarch, seven score and seven; and last, though not least, by Rhys Goch ap Rhiccert, who has left us twenty poems, chiefly on the same subject. The latter poet lived at Tir Tarll, in Glamorganshire; and in common with his contemporary, Davydd ap Gwilym, "the nightingale of Dyved," displayed an exuberance of fancy, an elegance of taste, and a fertility of invention, almost unknown to their poetical predecessors in the principality.

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#### ALEXANDER OF ESSEBIE.

(Circa 1350.)

Alexander, prior of the monastery of Essebie, in the reign of King Edward III., was reckoned among the chief of English poets and orators of that age.

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#### PETER FENTON.

(Circa 1369.)

Peter Fenton, a monk of Melrose Abbey, is said to have written "in old ryme, like to Chaucer," a narrative of the adventures of Robert Bruce. The work is mentioned by Gordon, in the preface to his poem on the same subject; but there is no trace of it, and it is not improbable that Fenton merely transcribed Barbour's poem.

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#### THOMAS HOCCELEVE.

(1370-1454.)

Particulars of Hocceleve's life have been very sparingly transmitted to us: some of those too which we have are totally inconsistent

with many of his sentiments, as delivered by him in his poetry. The very time of his birth, and the duration of his existence, are left exceedingly at large by all who mention him. Yet both of these may be pretty nearly ascertained from his writings. It is most probable



THOMAS HOCCLEVE.

that Hoccleve was born about the year 1370. From what our poet says of himself, he has been styled Chaucer's disciple. The age he was of when first honoured by the notice of this great master does not appear; but according to the computation of his birth, he must have been thirty years old when Chaucer died.

Pitts says that Hoccleve studied the law at Chester's Inn, and was a writer to the Privy Seal for twenty years. His residence at "Chestres Inn\* by the Strande" is testified by himself in the introduction to his poem *De Regimine Principum*. That he belonged to the Privy Seal for a considerable length of time, in the younger and middle part of his life, is almost manifest in his first poems. When he quitted this office, or what means of subsistence he afterwards had, cannot be so clearly determined. Pitts seems to insinuate that he was provided for by Humphrey duke of Gloucester, saying, "that he wonderfully celebrated this patron in his verses." Both these things may possibly be true; but no specific vouchers are adduced for either by Pitts. Mr. Warton, indeed, strengthens the

\* This, one of the buildings pulled down for the first erection of Somerset House, was once the town residence of the Bishops of Lichfield, who were formerly called Bishops of Chester.

latter assertion by saying, "Hoccleve in this poem (*De Regimine Principum*), and in others, often celebrates Humphrey duke of Gloucester." As to these others, Warton probably had grounds for what he advanced; but the poem *De Regimine Principum* makes no mention of Humphrey, nor was it at all likely that it should; since, at the time of Hoccleve's promulgating that work, Humphrey was neither duke of Gloucester nor of an age to be a patron. There are passages of the poems to Prince John which almost imply his being then under a tutor; and Humphrey was the youngest of the princes. In all the seventeen pieces published by Mr. Mason there is certainly not a word of Humphrey. One of the dates assigned as his era in Tanner's *Bibliotheca* is 1454, which is very likely to have been the year of his decease.

Bale tells us "that Hoccleve had imbibed the religious tenets of Wicliff and Berengarius," and seemingly quotes a passage from Walsingham to prove it. As the passage stands in the printed copies of Walsingham, it has been grievously misquoted by Bale. The historian is speaking of Wicliff in the year 1381, and says of him: "re-assumens damnatas opiniones Berengarii et Ocklefe." This passage would make Wicliff an Ocklesian, instead of Ocklefe a Wicliffian, and could never relate to our Hoccleve, then a boy not twelve years old. Indeed, from comparing Walsingham with himself in his *Ypodeigma Neustrie*, and with the Monk of Evesham's *Life of Richard II.*, the words "et Ocklefe" seem rather some blundering interpolation. Our author had so little imbibed the tenets of that early reformer, that he frequently shows himself much too violent against Wicliff's followers.

Many circumstances of Hoccleve's private life are displayed in his poems. Private anecdotes in the least degree characteristic are always amusing; and when they bring us acquainted with peculiar habits and manners after the intervention of centuries, can hardly fail to interest readers of curiosity. The subject of one of his poems is the poet's own dissipated life. Nor is his propensity to extravagance unaccountable, since the example of the second Richard's courts was always before his eyes in his youth.

The poetical merit of our author has been variously estimated by those who have treated of it. It would be idle to refer to Pitts or Bale as arbiters in this way; but William Browne, who had an easy vein of harmonious poetry, and cannot well be supposed an incompetent judge on the subject, has incorporated into his *Shepherd's Pipe* a whole poem written by Hoccleve, translated from the *Gesta Romanorum*, and entitled *The Story of Jonathas*. Browne soon after says:

“ Well I wot, the man that first  
 Sung this lay did quench his thirst  
 Deeply as did ever one  
 In the Muses’ Helicon.”

Mr. Warton, in his dissertation on the *Gesta Romanorum*, directly dissents from the writer of these praises; yet his chief reason for doing so seems not to be warranted by the real state of the fact. His words are: “He (Hoccleve) has given no sort of embellishment to his original.” Now, though Hoccleve adheres closely to the substance of the story, yet he embellishes it in various places by judicious insertions of his own, and of which there are no traces at all in his original. The tale would absolutely appear in certain parts of it as if it had been mutilated, were it not for these additional touches. In some of them there is a strain of pleasantry similar to that of Prior.

In his earlier volume of the *History of English Poetry*, Mr. Warton speaks unfavourably of the talents of Hoccleve, calling him “a feeble writer as a poet;” and goes so far as to say, “the titles of his pieces indicate coldness of genius.” And may not such a remark be said to *indicate* some degree of prejudice? Many an admirable poem would stand in danger of being consigned to oblivion, if an *index expurgatorius* should be framed from the bare construction of titles. The very person here stigmatised for coldness of genius is (a few pages after) deservedly commended by his censor for expressing great warmth of sensibility in some lines to the memory of Chaucer.

Mr. Warton’s final sentence against Hoccleve is grounded on supposing in him a total want of “invention and fancy.” But there are strong reasons for believing that none of Hoccleve’s poems published by Mr. Mason, except two of the shortest, could ever have been seen by Mr. Warton. Of the remaining fifteen, the title only of one is to be seen in Tanner, who could give no intimation as to where the poem itself existed. Mr. Tyrwhitt knew of no other ms. in which any of these fifteen pieces were to be met with. Had some of these been seen by Mr. Warton, it is highly probable that he would have perceived more originality in Hoccleve than he deemed him possessed of, and consequently have held him in a somewhat higher degree of estimation. There is at least through the whole of the poems of Hoccleve printed by Mr. Mason a negative merit, which Mr. Warton must have accounted singular in a poet of so early a period, since this very merit is alleged by himself against allowing the authenticity of the poems called Rowley’s,—the merit that there are no anachronisms, no incongruous combinations. It is not meant to be asserted that Hoccleve was always free from any defect of this sort;



but certainly the 2000 verses on different subjects published by Mr. Mason are entirely clear of that absurdity which Mr. Warton deemed inseparable from the productions of Hoccleve's era. Hoccleve's chief productions are: *The Tale of Jonathas and of a wicked Woman*; *Fable of a certain Emperess*; *A Prologue of the Nine Lessons that are read over All-Hallow Day*; *The most profitable and holsomest Craft, that is to cunne (know) and lerne to dye*; *Consolation offered by an Old Man*; *Pentasticcon to the King*; *Mercy, as defined by Saint Austin*; *Dialogue to a Friend*; *Dialogue between Occleef and a Beggar*; *The Letter of Cupid*; *Verses to an Empty Purse*. But Hoccleve's most considerable poem is his translation of *Ægidius De Regimine Principum*, or the Art of Government; a work highly esteemed in the middle ages, and translated early into Hebrew, French, Spanish, and English. In those days ecclesiastics and schoolmen presumed to dictate to kings, and to give rules for administering states, drawn from the narrow circle of speculation, and conceived amid the pendartries of a cloister. Hoccleve's paraphrase was never printed. It was from a drawing by Hoccleve, on a manuscript of this poem, now in the British Museum (MSS. Reg. 17 D. vi. 1), that the artist employed by Nicholas Brigham derived the materials for his portrait of Chaucer on his monument in Westminster Abbey. Hoccleve, then, was an artist as well as an author.

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### JOHN LYDGATE.

(1375-1460.)

Among the immediate successors of Chaucer in the series of English poets, John, surnamed, from the place of his birth in Suffolk, Lydgate, is confessedly the most tolerable. The time of his birth is not exactly known; but as he was ordained a subdeacon of Bury 1389, a deacon in 1393, and a priest in 1397, even if we suppose him to have received the first ordination at fourteen years of age, he cannot have been born later than 1375, that is to say twenty-five years before the death of Chaucer. This date naturally assigns him to the reign of Henry V., at whose command he undertook his metrical history of the siege of Troy, the best and most popular of his almost innumerable productions.

After a short education at Oxford, Lydgate travelled into France and Italy, and returned a complete master of the language and literature of both countries. He chiefly studied the Italian and French poets, particularly Dante, Boccaccio, and Alain Chartier;



LYDGATE PRESENTING HIS BOOK TO THE EARL OF WARWICK.



and became so distinguished a proficient in polite learning, that he opened a school in his monastery for teaching the sons of the nobility the arts of versification and the elegances of composition. Yet although philology was his object, he was not unfamiliar with



JOHN LYDGATE.

the fashionable philosophy; he was not only a poet and a rhetorician, but a geometrician and astronomer, a theologist and a disputant. Lydgate made considerable additions to those amplifications of our language, in which Chaucer, Gower, and Hoccleve led the way; and he is the first of our writers whose style is clothed with that perspicuity in which phraseology appears at this day to an English reader. To enumerate Lydgate's pieces would be to write the catalogue of a little library. No poet seems to have possessed greater versatility of talents. He moves with equal ease in every mode of composition. His hymns and his ballads have the same degree of merit; and whether his subject be the life of a hermit or a hero, of St. Austin or Guy Earl of Warwick, ludicrous or legendary, religious or romantic, a history or an allegory, he writes with facility. His transitions were rapid, from works of the most serious and laborious kind, to sallies of levity and pieces of popular entertainment. His muse was of universal access; and he was not only the poet of his monastery, but of the world in general. If a disguising was intended by the company of Goldsmiths, a mask before his majesty at Eltham, a May-game for the sheriffs and aldermen of London, a mumming before the lord-mayor, a procession of pageants

from the creation for the festival of Corpus Christi, or a carol for the coronation, Lydgate was consulted, and gave the poetry.

His manner is naturally verbose and diffuse. This circumstance contributed in no small degree to give a clearness and a fluency to his phraseology. For the same reason he is often tedious and languid. His chief excellence is in description, especially when the subject admits a flowery diction. He is seldom pathetic or animated. His most esteemed works are, his *History of Thebes*, intended as a continuation of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*; the *Falls of Princes*, a metrical paraphrase of Boccaccio's *De Casibus*; and the *History of the Siege of Troy*, a translation into verse of Colonna's prose history, which, containing the substance of Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis, and comprising all the materials of one class of romantic history, is valuable as a specimen of the learning as well as of the credulity of our ancestors. The popularity of this work was excessive, unbounded, and continued without much diminution during at least two centuries. To this the praises of succeeding writers bear ample testimony; but it is confirmed by a direct and most singular evidence. An anonymous writer has taken the pains to modernise the whole poem, consisting of 28,000 verses; to change the ancient context, and almost every rhyme, and to throw the whole into six-line stanzas; and yet so little was he solicitous to raise his own reputation at the expense of the original author, that though he has altered the title and preface of the work, he has still ascribed it to Lydgate. This strange instance of perverted talents and industry was published in 1614, under the title of *The Life and Death of Hector*. Lydgate died somewhere about 1460.

By Gray, Lydgate is ranked superior, not only to Hoccleve, but to Gower, in choice of expression and smoothness of verse. A selection from his minor poems has been published by the Percy Society, under the direction of Mr. Halliwell.

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### JOHN HARDING.

(Born circa 1390.)

The first poet that occurs in the reign of Edward IV. is John Harding. He was of northern extraction, and educated in the family of Lord Henry Percy; and at twenty-five years of age hazarded his fortunes at the decisive battle of Shrewsbury, fought against Percy and the Scots under Lord Douglas, in the year 1403. He appears to have been indefatigable in examining original records,

chiefly with a design of ascertaining the fealty due from the Scottish kings to the crown of England; and, for the elucidation of this important inquiry, he carried many instruments from Scotland at the hazard of his life, which he delivered at different times to the fifth and sixth Henry and to Edward IV. These investigations seem to have fixed his mind on the study of our national antiquities and history. At length he clothed his researches in rhyme, which he dedicated, under that form, to King Edward IV., and with the title of *The Chronicle of England unto the Reigne of King Edward the Fourth, in verse*. The copy probably presented to the king, although it exhibits at the end the arms of Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, most elegantly transcribed on vellum, and adorned with superb illuminations, is preserved among Selden's manuscripts in the Bodleian Library; it is richly bound and studded. At the end is a curious map of Scotland, together with many prose pieces by Harding of the historical kind. The work was printed at London, in 4to, by Grafton, who has prefixed a dedication of three leaves, in verse, to Thomas duke of Norfolk: a greatly improved edition has since been edited by Sir Henry Ellis. The author, concise and compendious in his narrative of events from Brutus to the reign of King Henry IV., is minute and diffuse in relating those affairs of which, for more than sixty years, he was a living witness, from that period to the reign of Edward IV. The poem seems to have been completed about the year 1470. In his final chapter the writer exhorts the king to recall his rival, King Henry VI., and to restore the partisans of that unhappy prince.

The work is fit only for the attention of an antiquary. Harding, in fact, may be pronounced the most impotent of our metrical historians, especially when we recollect the great improvements which English poetry had now received. His laborious and authentic chronicle has hardly those more modest graces which could properly recommend and adorn a detail of the British story in prose. He has left some pieces in the latter class of composition; and Winstanley says, "as his prose was very usefull, so was his poetry as much delightful!" Fuller, too, affirms our author to have "drunk as deep a draught of Helicon as any of his age," and the assertion may be partly true; it is certain, however, that the diction and imagery of our poetic composition would have remained in just the same state had Harding never written.

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## WILLIAM OF NASSYNGTON.

(Circa 1380.)

William of Nassyngton, a proctor or advocate in the Ecclesiastical Court of York, translated into English rhyme (about 1418) from the Latin, *The Mirror of Life, a Treatise on the Trinity and Unity*; a poem of several thousand verses, written by John of Waldly, an Augustine friar of Yorkshire, student in the Augustine convent at Oxford, the provincial of his order in England, and a strenuous opponent of Wickliffe.

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## GEORGE ASHBY.

(Born circa 1390.)

George Ashby, clerk of the signet to Margaret, queen of Henry VI., wrote a moral poem for the use of their son Prince Edward, on the *Active Policy of a Prince*, finished in the author's eightieth year. The prologue begins with a compliment to "Maisters Gower, Chaucer, and Lydgate;" a proof of the estimation which that celebrated triumvirate still enjoyed. The poem was never printed; but a copy, with a small mutilation at the end, remains among Bishop More's manuscripts at Cambridge.

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## ANDREW WYNTOWN.

(Circa 1420.)

Andrew of Wynthown appears to have been born about the middle of the long reign of David II., as he complains of the infirmities of old age when engaged in the first copy of his Chronicle. He is supposed to have been of the family of Alane of Wynthown, though this is but conjecture.

He was a canon regular of the Priory of St. Andrews, and in or before the year 1395, was, by the favour of his fellow-canons, elected prior of the monastery of St. Serf's Insh, in Loch Leven, one of the most ancient religious establishments of Scotland, founded about the year 700. Here he undertook his Chronicle, which was finished between the 3d September, 1420, and the return of King James from England in April 1424.

While our author was engaged on his work, some unknown person, of a genius similar to his own, sent him the history of Scotland, from the birth of David II. to the death of Robert II., apparently

written, or rather finished, in the reign of Robert III., which, having examined and improved, he gladly incorporated into his own work. This ample contribution is composed in the same style and same kind of verse with his own work ; so that, without the least breach of uniformity, it gives us the singular advantage of having the last eighty-three years of the history composed by two writers, who lived during the greater part of the time they wrote of.

Before Wyntown's time, the history of the Scots had been plunged into confusion almost inextricable by an insatiable and ignorant rage for antiquity, which placed the reign of Fergus 1200 years before that of Kenneth MacAlpin, who was made only the tenth in descent from him, thus involving the monstrous absurdity of allowing 120 years to each generation. Wyntown saw and felt the dilemma ; but not having sufficiently informed himself from ancient records, he could see no way of getting rid of it, and fairly gave it up.

Having afterwards obtained better information, he found it expedient to give a second improved copy of the Chronicle with the important correction, which, by enumerating the years of Fergus and his successors, reduces his era pretty near to the truth, being even a little below it ; though, at the same time, he could not drop the notion that the Scots were in Scotland 245 years before the Picts. But he knew nothing of the 44 (or 39) kings preceding Fergus, nor of his interpolated successors ; and, in short, has the happiness to be ignorant of many of the stories which were long deemed essential points of faith in Scottish history.

Fordun, our author's contemporary and fellow-labourer (though they were unknown to each other), fell upon a method of settling the chronology of Fergus very easily, by fairly splitting him into two kings, one of whom he places 100 years before his due time, and the other 330 years before the Christian era, leaving, however, the names, actions, and characters of the kings between his two Ferguses to be supplied from the "fine fancy" of Hector Boyse. These fictitious kings constitute the grossest fault in Fordun's history, which, except in this instance, where the ambition of false antiquity for the *honour of Scotland* has carried him off his feet, is in general compiled from the best materials he could obtain.

From a comparison of Fordun and Wyntown, who may be considered as two witnesses ignorant of the evidence given by each other, we may obtain a pretty just view of the unsettled and inaccurate idea which the Scots entertained, about the conclusion of the 14th century, of their early history.

It is probable that Wyntown did not very long survive the final conclusion of his work. The exact date of his death is not known.



The character of Wyntown as an historian is in a great measure common to the other historians and writers of his age, who generally admitted into their works the absurdities of tradition along with authentic narrative, and often without any mark of discrimination, esteeming it a sufficient standard of historic fidelity to narrate nothing but what they found written by others before them.

With respect to his poetical talents, the opinion of his editor, Mr. Macpherson, is, that "his work, in general, partakes little or nothing of the nature of poetry, unless rhyme can be said to constitute poetry; yet he now and then throws in some touches of true poetic description." "This, indeed," adds Mr. Ellis, "seems as much as can be fairly expected from a metrical annalist, for dates and numerals are of necessity unpoetical; and perhaps the ablest modern versifier, who should undertake to enumerate in metre the years of our Lord in only one century, would feel some respect for the ingenuity with which Wyntown has contrived to vary his rhymes throughout such a formidable chronological series as he has ventured to encounter. His genius is certainly inferior to that of his predecessor Barbour; but at least his versification is easy, his language pure, and his style often animated."

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### JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND.

(1394-1436.)

James the First was born in July 1394, of Anabella Drummond, the admirable queen of Robert III., in the 37th year of their marriage. He was committed to the care of Wardlaw, bishop of St. Andrews, who inspired him with his early love of letters.

After the assassination of David, prince of Scotland, Robert resolved, by the advice of Wardlaw, to send his only remaining son, James, to France, for safety rather than for education. This purpose was not quite concealed from the Duke of Albany and his associates. Sir David Fleming, the king's kinsman, was intrusted to convey the infant prince to his place of embarkation. In pursuance of this trust, Sir David placed the prince within the Bass, an inaccessible rock in the Forth, towards the end of March 1405, there to remain till the ship should arrive from Leith which was to carry him to France; but Sir David, returning with his friends from North Berwick, through Haddingtonshire, was attacked by James Douglas, of Balveny, the laird of Dirleton, and, after a stout resistance, slain. The prince meanwhile remained in the castle of the Bass, and when the ship came down from Leith sailed for France; but cruising on

the northern coast of England, and landing near Flamborough Head for refreshments (Palm Sunday, 1405), he was taken prisoner, and carried to Henry IV. at Windsor.



JAMES THE FIRST, AS A BOY.

That Henry had no right to consider as a prisoner the sovereign of an independent nation, whom an act of insolent violence had placed within his power, is perfectly evident ; but the accident was perhaps ultimately advantageous to the prince himself, as well as to the nation which he was born to govern. He was at this time only ten years of age ; and Henry, though he treated him with rigour, and even kept him for two years confined in the Tower, took the greatest care of his education, and appointed as his governor Sir John Pelham, a man of worth and learning, under whose tuition he made so rapid a progress, that he soon became a prodigy of talents and accomplishments. His character, as drawn by the historians of that age, is such as we seldom see realised. We are assured that he became a proficient in every branch of polite literature—in grammar, oratory, Latin and English poetry, music, jurisprudence, and the philosophy of the times ; and that his dexterity in tilts and tournaments, in wrestling, in archery, and in the sports of the field, was perfectly unrivalled. Some parts of this description are probably exaggerated ; but the ex-

cellent laws which James enacted after his return to Scotland, and the happiness which his people enjoyed in consequence of his policy, his firmness, and his justice, bear the most unequivocal testimony to the truth of one portion of the picture; and his poetical remains are sufficient to evince that his literary talents were not overrated by his contemporaries.



JAMES THE FIRST, AS A MAN.

During fifteen years of his captivity he seemed forgotten, or at least neglected, by his subjects. The admiration of strangers, and the consciousness of his own talents, only rendered his situation more irksome; and he had begun to abandon himself to despair, when he was fortunately consoled for his seclusion at Windsor Castle by a passion of which sovereigns in quiet possession of a throne have seldom the good fortune to feel the genuine influence. The object of his adoration was Lady Jane Beaufort, daughter of John duke of Somerset, whom he afterwards married, and in whose commendation he composed his principal work, called the *King's Quhair*. This poem, consisting of 197 stanzas, divided into six cantos, has much allegorical machinery, which was apparently suggested to him by the study of Boethius, the favourite author of the time; but it also contains various particulars of his own life, is full of simplicity and feeling, and is not inferior in poetical merit to any similar production of Chaucer: indeed, some of the verses are so highly finished, that they would not disfigure the compositions of Dryden, Pope, or Gray. Nor was King James's talent confined to serious and pathetic works. Two poems of a ludicrous cast, and which have been the constant favourites of the Scottish people to the present day, are now universally attributed to this monarch. These are *Christ's Kirk on*

*the Green*, and *Pebbles on the Play*; the first composed in the northern, the second in the southern dialect of Scotland. A third, called *Falkland on the Green*, which Pinkerton supposes to have described the popular sports of the central district of the kingdom, and to have been written in the Fifeshire dialect, has hitherto eluded the research of antiquaries. Notwithstanding the high character of this prince, he was assassinated at Perth on the 21st February, 1437, in the 43d year of his age and the 31st of his reign, by Robert Stewart and Patrick Graham, at the instigation of William Earl of Athol. The assassins were punished with a barbarity which excited pity for the sufferers rather than indignation at the crime.

## BENEDICT BURGH.

(Circa 1410-1483.)

Benedict Burgh, master of arts of Oxford, archdeacon of Colchester, prebendary of St. Paul's, and canon of St. Stephen's chapel at Westminster, translated, about 1470, the popular distichs entitled *Cato's Morals* into octave stanzas, then called the royal stanza, for the use of his pupil, Lord Bouchier, son of the Earl of Essex. He is the author also of "A Cristemasse Game, made by Maister Benet, how God almyhtie seyde to his Apostelys, and echeon of them were baptiste, and none knew of other;" a piece in twelve stanzas, an apostle being assigned to each stanza. Another work by our author is *Aristotle's A B C*, made by Maister Benet. Burgh also translated into English verse Daniel Church's *Cato Parvus*. Both the *Catos* of his version occur among the Harleian manuscripts in the British Museum, as forming one and the same work, viz. *Liber Minoris Catonis et Majoris, translatus ex Latino in Anglicum per Mag. Benet Borugh*. Burgh's performance is altogether of the most jejune character. It is, indeed, true that the only critical excellence of the original, which consists of a terse conciseness of sentences, although not always expressed in the purest latinity, will not easily bear to be transfused. Burgh, but without sufficient foundation, is said to have finished Lydgate's *Governance of Princes*.

## JOHN WALTON.

(Circa 1410.)

John Walton, the only poet assigned by Warton to the reign of Henry IV., and who is poetically better known as Johannes Capel-

lanus, or John the Chaplain, was canon of Oseney, and died sub-dean of York. He was patronised by the learned Thomas Chaundler, chancellor of Wells. His poetical talents were applied to a translation into verse of Boethius *de Consolatione*.

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### THOMAS BRAMPTON.

(Circa 1414.)

Thomas Brampton is the author of a metrical version of the Seven Penitential Psalms, first printed by the Percy Society from a manuscript in the British Museum. The author was a confessor of the Minorite Friars, but in what part of England does not appear. As to the character of his work (written in 1414), the editor, Mr. Black, observes: "The religious poetry of the Middle Ages consists for the most part of dull versification, ennobled with few of the lofty sentiments that pure Christianity inspires, and enlivened with few flights of imagination, except those derived from a wild and dreary superstition. That of our own language, therefore, is chiefly valuable for its philological data, and as constituting a part of our national literature." Brampton's poem, however, contains some sentiments of piety and some touches of poetry, that may render it more acceptable than its contemporaries. Mr. Black conjectures that Brampton was the author also of the poem *Against Lollardie*, printed in Ritson's *Ancient Songs*; the style and metre of which are very like those of the paraphrase of the Seven Psalms, and suggest the probability, further, for a like reason, that he wrote the *Ploughman's Tale*, which in some old copies of the *Canterbury Tales* is inserted as a supplement to Chaucer's works. The author's religious notions were what might be expected of that dark age. He represents himself, in an elegant introduction, as restless, rising at midnight from his bed, repeating an *antiphona* from his breviary, going to his confessor, and receiving instructions for the relief of his conscience; one of these was to say over the seven psalms, which he proceeds to do, verse by verse, making the first words of his favourite *antiphona* the burden of his meditation. The poem is erroneously ascribed by Warton conjecturally, and by Ritson, *suo more*, dogmatically, to Bishop Alcock.

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## HUGH CAMPDEN.

(Circa 1420.)

Hugh Campden, a poet in the reign of Henry V., is known to us as the transiator of several romances of great popularity in his time. The first of these was printed with the following title, at the expense of Robert Sallwood, a monk of St. Augustine's convent at Canterbury, in the year 1510: "The History of King Boccus and Sydrache; how he confounded his lerned men, and in the sight of them dronke stronge venyme, in the name of ye Trynytye, and dyd him no hurt. Also his divynities that he lerned of the Book of Noe. Also his profesyes that he had by revelation of the angel. Also his aunsweres to the questyons of wysdom, with muche wysdome containyd in (the) noumber ccclxv. Translated by Hugo of Caumpeden, out of French into Englyshe," &c. There is no sort of elegance in the diction, nor harmony in the versification. It is in the minstrel metre.

## ROBERT HENRYSON.

(1425-1495.)

The time and the place of this poet's birth are not certainly known, but he is supposed to have been born in 1425. Urry styles him chief schoolmaster of Dunfermline; and Lord Hailes conjectures that he officiated as preceptor in the Benedictine convent there. From the former of these writers we learn that he flourished during the reign of Henry VIII.; and that he died before Dunbar appears from the following couplet of that celebrated poet's *Lament for the Deth of the Makkaris*:

"In Dunfermling deth has tane Broun,  
With gude Mr. Robert Henrysoun."

The longest of Henryson's poems is *The Testament of Faire Creseide*, which, as Urry describes it, "learnedly undertakes, in a fine poetical way, to express the punishment and end due to a false inconstant wretch, which commonly terminates in extreme misery." This poem is printed in Urry's edition of Chaucer, and contains, according to Irvine, many strokes of poetical description, which only a writer of more than ordinary genius could have produced. Propriety, it must be admitted, is frequently violated; but the beauties of the work are more than sufficient to counterbalance its deformi-

ties. Of his *Morall Fabillis of Esope*, several have been published. The best of his productions, the popular ballad of *Robine and Makyne*, is to be found, with other specimens of his muse, in Lord Hailes's extracts from the Bannatyne manuscripts. Irvine, with pardonable partiality, prefers this pastoral of his countryman "to the similar attempts" of Spenser and Browne. One of Henryson's poems, also preserved by Hailes, is a singular production, entitled *The Garment of Gude Ladys*, a sort of paraphrase of 1 Timothy ii. 9-11, in which a comparison drawn between female ornaments and female virtues is carried so far as to become somewhat ridiculous. This strange conversion of the virtues into the stock-in-trade of an allegorical mantua-maker was not, however, original in our poet, but was first conceived by Olivier de la Marche, who, in a poem entitled *Le Triomphe, ou Parement des Dames d'Honneur*, recommends to the ladies *slippers of humility, shoes of diligence, stockings of perseverance, garters of ferme propos* (i. e. determination), *a petticoat of chastity, a pincushion of patience*, &c. The *Abbey Walk*, another of Henryson's poems, is of a solemn character, and not altogether incapable of impressing the imagination. Its object is to inculcate submission to the various dispensations of Providence; and in the management of this theme he evinces some degree of skill in the poetical art. His thoughts are such as the pious mind willingly recognises; nor are they debased by an unsuitable poverty of diction.

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### JOHN AUDELAY.

(Circa 1426.)

Among the *Capellani* of the quiet monastery of Haughmond, near Shrewsbury, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, lived one, a truly penitent and righteous monk, who atoned for the excesses of his early life by the devotion of an enthusiast, and called the priesthood to their duty by the voice of literature. Though an anti-Wickliffite, he was a zealous advocate for what he deemed the reformed Church, and for the return of his leaders to their early discipline. His name was John Audelay or Awdlay. His works, written when their author was blind and deaf, are chiefly of a religious cast; an exception, some lines on Henry VI., is among the specimens of his poetry printed by the Percy Society, under the care of Mr. Halliwell, from a rare if not unique manuscript in Mr. Douce's collection. This manuscript is imperfect; and even the small portion of it selected by Mr. Halliwell is mainly valuable as illus-

trating the Shropshire dialect of that period. Among the works of this poet are an account of *St. Paul's Journey to the Regions of the Wicked*; a *Prayer to St. Francis*; a curious alliterative poem, *De tribus Regibus*, &c.

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## HENRY THE MINSTREL.

(Born circa 1440.)

So little is known with respect to Henry the Minstrel, that we can scarcely pretend to add any thing to the meagre account which has been given of him by former writers. As we cannot certainly fix the time, we can form no conjecture even as to the place, of his birth. The only historical record concerning him is supplied by Major. "Henry, who was blind from his birth," says he, "in the time of my infancy composed the whole *Book of William Wallace*, and committed to writing in vulgar poetry, in which he was well skilled, the things that were commonly related of him. For my own part, I give only partial credit to writings of this description. By the recitation of



ABBAY CRAIG.

these, however, in the presence of persons of the highest rank, he procured, as he indeed deserved, food and raiment." This account, as it merely respects the recitation of his poem, is not inconsistent with



what Henry himself says, when he asserts his independence in the composition of it, and declares that the motive by which he was chiefly actuated was to preserve the memory of the illustrious deeds of Wallace from oblivion.

Mr. Pinkerton has given 1470 as the date when Henry first appeared in the character of an author. It is generally admitted, indeed, that Major was born in the year 1469. Henry, by reason of his blindness, could not have himself written his own poetical effusions; and it may be reasonably supposed that, from his dependant and ambulatory mode of life, he could not employ an amanuensis properly qualified for the task. Hence may we account even for the apparent absurdity of some passages in his work. Bating these imperfections, his descriptions are often so vivid, and his images so just, that he undoubtedly ranks higher as a poetical writer than either Barbour or Wyntown, who had all the advantages of a liberal education—such, at least, as the times could afford. Mr. Pinkerton has thus expressed his sentiments concerning this work: “It has great merit for the age, and is eminently curious. The language in a few places is not sense. When, by altering a word or two, the sense may be restored, attention to this will not only be allowable, but laudable, in any proper editor, especially when we consider the singularity of the case, and that the poem is very good sense every where, save in perhaps a dozen lines at most.”

Mr. Ellis remarks: “That a man *born blind* should excel in any science is extraordinary, though by no means without example; but that he should become an excellent poet is almost miraculous, because the soul of poetry is description. Perhaps, therefore, it may be easily assumed that Henry was not inferior in point of genius either to Barbour or Chaucer, nor indeed to any poet of any age or country.”

Although, from his disastrous circumstances, the principal fountain of knowledge was shut up to poor Henry, it is evident that he had made trial of every other within his reach. Knowing the facts of his blindness, his itinerant life, and oral publication of his poetry, the generality of readers, it may be presumed, have previously formed a contemptuous idea of the author, as if he had been a common ballad-singer, and have either read his book under the influence of this prepossession, or have thrown it aside as unworthy of their attention; but it should be recollected that a bard or minstrel was once ranked very high among our forefathers; and although the profession had considerably fallen in repute by the time that Henry flourished, he did nothing that was deemed unworthy of the character when at its highest elevation.

It were futile to seek to exculpate Henry from the charge of cre-

dulity. Far more, however, has been said on his ignorance than can be well supported; but even judging from this work, which there is every reason to believe is disfigured by unavoidable corruptions, there is sufficient evidence that, from his early years, he must have used all the means of information which were within his reach. He seems to have been pretty well acquainted with that kind of history which was commonly read in that period. He alludes to the history of Hector, of Alexander the Great, of Julius Cæsar, and of Charlemagne. His mode of expression is often very elliptical. He very often omits the pronouns, whether relative or personal. This gives his work an air of absurdity, and makes him appear far more illiterate than was probably the case. The manner and date of his death are entirely unknown.

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## ANTONY WIDVILLE, EARL RIVERS.

(Circa 1442-1483.)

Antony Widville, Earl Rivers, was son of Sir Richard Widville, by Jacqueline, duchess dowager of Bedford, and brother of the fair Lady Grey. When about seventeen years of age, he was taken by force from Sandwich, with his father, and carried to Calais by some of the opposite faction. The credit of his sister, the countenance and example of his prince, the boisterousness of the times, nothing softened, nothing roughened the mind of this amiable lord, who was as gallant as his luxurious brother-in-law, without his weaknesses; as brave as the heroes of either Rose, without their savageness; studious in the intervals of business; and devout after the manner of those whimsical times, when men challenged others whom they never saw, and went barefoot to visit shrines in countries of which they had scarce a map. In short, Lord Antony was, as Sir Thomas More says, “*Vir, haud facile discernas manuve aut consilio promptior.*”

He distinguished himself both as a warrior and a statesman. The Lancastrians making an insurrection in Northumberland, he attended the king into those parts, and was a chief commander at the siege of Alnwick Castle. In the tenth of the same reign he defeated the Dukes of Clarence and Warwick in a skirmish near Southampton, and prevented them seizing a guard-ship called the Trinity. He attended the king into Holland; on the change of the scene returned with him; had a great share in his victories; and was constituted governor of Calais, and captain-general of all the king's forces by sea and land. He had before been sent ambassador to negotiate a marriage between the king's sister and the Duke of Burgundy, and

in the same character concluded a treaty between King Edward and the Duke of Bretagne. On Prince Edward being created Prince of Wales, he was appointed his governor, and had a grant of the office of chief butler of England, and was even on the point of attaining the high honour of espousing the Scottish princess, sister of King James III.

Earl Rivers had his share of his sister's afflictions as well as of her triumphs; but making a right use of adversity, and understanding that there was to be a jubilee and pardon at Santiago, in Spain, in 1473, he sailed from Southampton, and for some time was "ful ver-  
tuously occupied in goying of pilgrimages to Seint James in Galice, to Rome, and to Seint Nicholas de Bar in Puyte (Apulia), and other diverse holie places; also he procured and gotten of our holy fader the pope a greet and a large indulgence, and grace unto the chapell of our Ladye of the Piewe by Seint Stephen's at Westmenstre." Earl Rivers was beheaded at Pomfret, in 1483, by order of Richard III.

The works of this gallant and learned person are :

1. *The Dictes and Sayinges of the Philosophers; translated from the*



W. X. C.

CAXTON.

*French version of Messire Jehan de Jeanville, sometyme Provost of Parys.*  
This book is supposed to be the second ever printed in England

by Caxton—at least, the first which he printed at Westminster—being dated November 18, 1477. A fair manuscript of this translation, with an illumination representing the earl introducing (it is uncertain whether) Caxton or the original author to Edward IV., his queen, and the prince, is preserved in the archiepiscopal library at Lambeth. A remarkable circumstance attending this book is the gallantry of the earl, who omitted to translate part of it because it contained sarcasms of Socrates against the fair sex; and it is no less remarkable that his printer ventured to translate the satire, and add it to his lordship's performances, yet with an apology for his presumption.

2. *The Morale Proverbes of Christyne of Pyse*. This is a translation of *Les Proverbes moreaux et le Livre de Prudence par Christine de Pisan*, into a poem of 203 lines, the greatest part of which the noble writer contrived to make conclude with the letter *e*; an instance at once of his lordship's application, and of the bad taste of an age which had witticisms and whims to struggle with as well as ignorance.

3. *The Boke named Cordyale; or, Memorare Novissima*. A translation from the French of an unknown author.

4. *Divers Balades agenst the Seven dedely Synnes*.

5. *A Balet by the Earl Rivers*. This, the noble writer's only original composition, was composed by him during his cruel confinement in Pomfret Castle, and the sentiments it conveys are tinctured with sage reflections and manly resignation.

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## JOHN NORTON.

(Circa 1444.)

John Norton, born at Bristol about the year 1444, was the most skilful alchemist of his age, although, as he relates, he occupied but forty days in learning his so potent art at twenty-eight years of age. In the year 1477 he completed the work which has entitled him to a place in the list of British poets—*The Ordinal; or, a Manual of the Chemical Art*. It was presented to Nevil, archbishop of York, a great patron of the hermetic philosophers, who grew so numerous in England about this time as to occasion an act of parliament against the transmutation of metals. Norton's reason for treating his subject in rhyme was to circulate the principles of a science of the most consummate utility among the unlearned. The poem, which was printed by Ashmole in his *Theatrum Chemicum*, 1652, is totally void of any poetical elegance. The only wonder which it relates

belonging to an art so fertile in striking inventions, and contributing to enrich the storehouse of Arabian romance with so many magnificent imageries, is that of an alchemist who projected a bridge of gold over the Thames, near London, crowned with pinnacles of gold, which, being studded with carbuncles, diffused a blaze of light in the dark. Norton's heroes in the occult sciences are Bacon, Albertus Magnus, and Raymond Lully, to whose specious promises of supplying the coinage of England with inexhaustible sources of philosophical gold, King Edward III. became an illustrious dupe.

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### GEORGE RIPLEY.

(Circa 1450.)

George Ripley, another poet on chemistry, was accomplished in many parts of erudition, and still maintains his reputation as a learned chemist of the lower ages. He was a canon regular of the monastery of Bridlington in Yorkshire, a great traveller, studying his art in various parts of Europe. Ashmole states, that during a long stay at Rhodes, Ripley gave the Knights of Malta 100,000*l.* annually towards maintaining the wars against the Turks; a statement manifesting the writer's belief that his hero was already in possession of the philosopher's stone. On Ripley's return from abroad, Pope Innocent VIII. absolved him from the observance of the rules of his order, that he might prosecute his studies with more convenience and freedom. But his convent not concurring in this very liberal indulgence, he turned Carmelite at St. Botolph's, in Lincolnshire, and died an anchorite of that fraternity in 1490. His chemical poems are nothing more than the doctrines of alchemy clothed in plain language and a very rugged versification. The capital performance is the *Compounds of Alchemie*, written in the year 1471, printed in 1591, and again by Ashmole in his *Theatrum Chemicum*, and thrice translated into Latin. It is in the octave metre, and dedicated to Edward IV. Ripley has left a few other compositions on his favourite science, also printed by Ashmole, who was an enthusiast in this abused species of philosophy. One of them, the *Medulla*, written in 1476, is dedicated to Archbishop Nevil. These pieces have no other merit than that of serving to develop the history of chemistry in England. They certainly contributed nothing to the state of our poetry.

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## THOMAS CHESTRE.

(Circa 1450.)

Thomas Chestre was a writer for the minstrels in the reign of Henry VI. No anecdote of his life is preserved. He has left a lay, entitled *Sir Launfal*, a memorial of one of Arthur's knights, who is celebrated, with other champions, in a set of French metrical tales or romances, written by Marie de France, under the name of Lanval. This poem, as altered into the romance of *Sir Lambwell*, forms part of Ritson's Collection. There appears some evidence to prove that Chestre was also the author of the metrical romance (not hitherto printed) called the *Erle of Tholouse*.

## — HOLLAND.

(Circa 1450.)

— Holland, who is mentioned by Dunbar and by Lindsay, and who appears to have been a retainer of Archibald Douglas, Earl of Murray, is the author of an uncouth poem called the *Houlate*, a kind of moral fable, illustrative of the danger of pride, but conducted with a very slight degree of poetical skill. The plan neither possesses the charm of novelty, nor is recommended by propriety of execution. The production may, however, be viewed as a curious specimen of the ancient Scottish poetry.

## JOHN SKELTON.

(Circa 1460-1527.)

Most of the poems of John Skelton were written in the reign of Henry VIII.; but he had been laureated at Oxford so far back as 1489, having appeared as an author, in commemoration of the death of Edward IV., at the still earlier period of 1483, so that we may assume him to have been born in the year 1460. The locality of his birth is believed to have been Diss, in Norfolk, though his family appears to have been of Northumbrian descent. Having studied at both universities, he became M.A. at Cambridge in 1484. Skelton took orders in 1498; and prior to 1507 was promoted to the rectory of Diss. But for his buffooneries and his satirical ballads against

the Mendicants he was severely censured, and perhaps suspended, by the arbitrary Bishop Wykke, his diocesan, from exercising the duties of the sacerdotal function. Wood says he was also punished by the bishop "for having been guilty of *certain crimes, as most poets are*;" the crime in question being that of having married. But these persecutions only served to quicken his ludicrous disposition, and to exasperate the acrimony of his satire. As his sermons could be no longer a vehicle for his abuse, he vented his ridicule in rhyming libels. At length, daring to attack the dignity of Cardinal Wolsey, he was closely pursued by the officers of that powerful minister, and taking shelter in the sanctuary of Westminster Abbey, was entertained and protected by Bishop Islip till the day of his death in the year 1529. He was buried in the church of St. Margaret.

Skelton was warmly patronised by Henry Algernon Percy, the fifth Earl of Northumberland, a man who loved literature at a time when many of the nobility of England could hardly read or write their names, and was the general patron of such genius as his age produced. He encouraged Skelton to write an elegy on the death of his father, which is still extant.

It is in vain to apologise for the coarseness, obscenity, and scurrility of "*angry Skelton*," as Bishop Hall tersely designates him, by saying that his poetry is tinctured with the manners of his age. Skelton would have been a writer without decorum at any period. The manners of Chaucer's age were undoubtedly more rough and unpolished than those of the reign of Henry VII. and VIII.; yet Chaucer, a poet abounding in humour, and often employed in describing the vices and follies of the world, writes with delicacy when compared with Skelton.

Skelton's characteristic vein of humour was capricious and grotesque. If his whimsical extravagances ever move our laughter, at the same time they shock our sensibility. His festive levities are not only vulgar and indelicate, but frequently want truth and propriety; his subjects are often as ridiculous as his metre; and he sometimes debases his matter by his versification. On the whole, his genius seems better suited to low burlesque than to liberal and manly satire.

A list of Skelton's works would occupy several pages of this work. They have all been collected (2 vols. 8vo, 1843) by the accomplished critic Mr. Dyce, who has printed many of them for the first time.

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## WILLIAM DUNBAR.

(1465-1530.)

William Dunbar was born in 1465, in East Lothian, and became a travelling novitiate of the Franciscan order, in which character he visited several parts of England and France; but disliking this mode of life, he returned to Scotland, where he died about 1530. In his younger days (writes Pinkerton) he seems to have had great expectations that his merit would have recommended him to an ecclesiastical benefice; and frequently, in his small poems, he addresses King James IV. to that purpose, but apparently without success; for he spent his life in a state of neglected indigence, while others, of far inferior pretensions, were loaded with the revenues of the church. "While some priests," he complains, "enjoy seven benefices, I am not possessed of one." The cause of this neglect is not known; it had certainly nothing to do, in that age of universal depravity and irreligion, with the loose tone of many of his earlier productions, which of itself would rather have recommended him to favour.

Warton, who has bestowed great commendations on Dunbar, observes that his genius is peculiarly of "a moral and didactic cast;" and it is certainly in such pieces that he is most confessedly superior to all who preceded, and to the large proportion of those who have succeeded him; but his satires, his allegorical and descriptive poetry, and his tales, are all admirable and full of fancy and originality.

His chief productions are, *The Thistle and the Rose* and *The Golden Terge*. The first of these was composed for the marriage (1503) of James IV. of Scotland with Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry VII.; an event well calculated to have produced many invocations to the Muses, but which probably was hailed by very few panegyrics so delicate and ingenious as this of Dunbar. In an allegorisation of the royal bridegroom as the thistle, and of the bride as the rose, the poet has interwoven a number of rich and glowing descriptions, much excellent advice, and many delicate compliments, without adulation. *The Golden Terge* is, perhaps, still superior to *The Thistle and the Rose*: this is a moral allegory, the object of which is to show the gradual and imperceptible influence of love, which even the golden target of reason cannot always repel. There are descriptions of natural scenery in this poem equal to any thing in poetry. Of Dunbar's comic pieces, all of which possess considerable merit, the most excellent are his two tales of the *Two Married Women and the Widow* and the *Friars of Berwick*; the former of which, in particular, Bishop



Percy considers equal to the most humorous productions of Chaucer. The *Friars of Berwick* is the prototype of Ramsay's *Monk and Miller's Wife*, and very superior to it in pungency of humour.

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### GAWIN DOUGLAS.

(Circa 1475-1522.)

One of the most distinguished luminaries that marked the restoration of letters in Scotland at the commencement of the sixteenth century, not only by a general eminence in elegant erudition, but by a cultivation of the vernacular poetry of his country, is Gawin Douglas, the third son of Archibald the great Earl Douglas, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Lord Boyd, a nobleman who for some time held the office of high chamberlain. He was born in the year 1475. According to the practice of that age, especially in Scotland, his education probably commenced in a grammar-school of one of the monasteries; there is undoubted proof that it was finished at the University of Paris. It is presumable, as he was intended for the sacred function, that he was sent to Paris for the purpose of studying the canon law, in consequence of a decree promulgated by James I., which tended in some degree to reform the illiteracy of the clergy, as it enjoined that no ecclesiastic of Scotland should be preferred to a prebend of any value without a competent skill in that science. Having entered into holy orders, he was appointed rector of Hawick; next, as early at least as 1509, he was nominated provost of the collegiate church of St. Giles, in Edinburgh,—a situation of no small dignity and emolument, which he enjoyed in conjunction with his other benefice. In 1514 the queen-mother (who afterwards married his nephew, the Earl of Angus) presented him to the abbey of Aberbrothoch, and soon after to the archbishopric of St. Andrew's; but the Pope having refused to confirm his nomination, he never assumed the title. In the next year (1515) he became Bishop of Dunkeld, and after some struggle obtained peaceable possession of that see. But neither his ecclesiastical character, nor his learning, nor his many virtues, were able to preserve him, in those times of violence, from the proscription which involved the whole family of Douglas; so that, towards the close of the year 1521, he was compelled, by the persecution of the Duke of Albany, to seek for protection in England, where he died about the month of April 1522, and was buried in the Savoy church.

The only remaining works of this poet are, 1. *King Hart*; 2. *The*

*Palace of Honour*; 3. a translation of Virgil's *Æneid*. Mr. Pinkerton has printed the first of these, from a Ms. in the Maitland collection, in his *Ancient Scottish Poems*; and the second, from the edition of 1633, in the first volume of his *Scottish Poems*. Of the third there



DUNKELD.

have been many editions, of which the best is that of Edinburgh, 1710, published by Mr. Ruddiman, with an excellent life of the author, and a very curious and valuable glossary.

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### STEPHEN HAWES.

(Circa 1480.)

The only writer deserving the name of a poet in the reign of Henry VII. is Stephen Hawes. He was patronised by that monarch, who possessed some tincture of literature, and is said by Bacon to have confuted a Lollard in a public disputation at Canterbury.

Hawes flourished about the close of the 15th century, and was a native of Suffolk. After an academical education at Oxford, he travelled much in France, and became a complete master of the French and Italian poetry. His polite accomplishments quickly procured him an establishment in the household of the king, who, struck with the liveliness of his conversation, and because he could repeat by memory most of the old English poets, especially Lydgate, made him groom of the privy chamber. His facility in the French tongue was a qualification which might strongly recommend him to the favour of Henry VII., who was fond of studying the best French books then in vogue.

Hawes has left many poems, which are now but imperfectly known and scarcely remembered. These are : 1. *The Conversion of Swerers*, in octave verses, 1509 ; 2. *A joyfull Meditation of all England on the Coronacyon of our most naturall Sovereign Lord, King Henry the Eighth, in verse* ; 3. *The Consolation of Lovers* ; 4. *The Exemplar of Virtue* ; 5. *The Delight of the Soul* ; 6. *Of the Prince's Marriage* ; 7. *The Alphabet of Birds* ; 8. *The Passetyme of Pleasure, containing the Knowledge of the seven Sciences and the course of Man's Lyfe in this Worlde*.\*

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### ALEXANDER BARCLAY.

(Circa 1480-1552.)

Alexander Barclay, whom some writers claim as a Scotchman, while others call him a Devonshire or Somersetshire man, became, in or about 1495, a student at Oriel College, Oxford, where he is said to have distinguished himself by his talents and application ; he also appears to have spent some time at Cambridge. He afterwards travelled into Holland, Germany, Italy, and France, for the purpose of acquiring the languages of those countries, in all of which he seems to have made a considerable proficiency. On his return to England he was appointed one of the priests or prebendaries of the college of St. Mary Ottery, in Devonshire ; afterwards he became a Benedictine monk of Ely monastery, and at length took the habit of the Franciscans at Canterbury. He temporised with the changes of religion ; for he possessed some church preferments in the reign of Edward VI., amongst others the church of All Saints in Lombard Street. He died very old, at Croydon in Surrey, August 24, 1552. Barclay was

\* *The Temple of Glasce*, which Warton assigns to Hawes, was written by Lydgate.

a voluminous writer, particularly of translations, which were much admired by his contemporaries, as being distinguished by an ease and fluency which are not to be found in any other author of his age; but his poetical merit seems to have been a good deal overrated.

His smaller pieces of poetry consist of, 1. *Five Eclogues on the Miseries of Courtiers*, translated from Sylvius; 2. *A Satire on Skelton*; 3. *The Lives of St. George, St. Catherine, St. Margaret, and St. Etheldreda*; and 4. *Five Eclogues from the Latin of Baptist Mantuan*. From these, which Mr. Warton supposes to be the first eclogues written in English, he has selected a number of passages which, though they have no other merit, contain some curious particulars relating to the manners and customs of the time of the work.

But Barclay's principal and most popular poem was his *Ship of Fools*, a paraphrase from the German poem, written in 1494, by Sebastian Brandt, or rather from the Latin metrical translation published in the following year. The work was intended to ridicule the vices and follies of every rank and profession, under the allegory of a ship freighted with fools of all kinds; "but it is," says Mr. Warton, "without variety of incident or artifice of fable."

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#### JULIANA BERNERS.

(Circa 1490.)

Dame Juliana Berners, sister of Richard Lord Berners, and prioress of the nunnery of Sopewell, wrote, about the year 1481, three English tracts on hawking, hunting, and armoury or heraldry, which were printed in the neighbouring monastery of St. Alban's, in the year 1486, and again at Westminster, by Wynkyn de Worde, in 1496. From an abbess disposed to turn author we might more reasonably have expected a manual of meditations for the closet, or select rules for making salves, or distilling strong waters. But the diversions of the field were not thought inconsistent with the character of a religious lady of this eminent rank, who resembled an abbot in respect of exercising an extensive manorial jurisdiction, and who hawked and hunted in common with other ladies of distinction. Her work is mentioned here because the second of these treatises is written in rhyme. It is spoken in her own person; but the whole work is a translation from the French and Latin, *The Boke of the Blazying of Armys* being an abstract of Upton's work *De Re Militari et Factis Illustribus*, written about 1441. The barbarism of the times strongly appears in the indelicate expressions which she often

uses, and which are equally incompatible with her sex and profession. The second edition contains an additional treatise on the art of angling; as also a sort of lyrical epilogue to the book of hunting, which is not entirely devoid of merit. An edition was printed by W. Powel in 1550, under the title of *The Gentleman's Academy, or the Book of St. Alban's concerning Hawking, Hunting, and Armory*. The latest edition is that by Mr. Haslewood.

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### SIR DAVID LINDSAY.

(Circa 1490-1557.)

Sir David Lindsay, the descendant of an ancient family, was born in or about the year 1490, at his paternal seat, The Mount, near Cupar, in Fife. Having been educated at St. Andrew's, he travelled through England, France, Italy, and Germany, and returned to Scotland about 1514. Soon after his return, he became one of the gentlemen of the king's chamber, and had the charge of superintending the education of the young prince, afterwards King James V. About 1537 he was employed by that monarch as his ambassador to the Emperor Charles V., as also to France, to negotiate the king's marriage,—a proof that he possessed much of his master's confidence; which, indeed, he seems to have deserved by the affection with which he served him, and by the honest and wise counsels which he never failed to offer. But the only permanent establishment he ever gained at court was the post of Lyon king-at-arms, an office of more honour than emolument.

Of James V. he always speaks in terms of affection; and although it appears from his own works that he experienced occasional mortifications, yet his attachment continued without diminution. He was one of the few courtiers who were present at the king's premature death. The enemies of whom he complains were probably the dignified clergy, whom he has satirised with unparalleled boldness, and whom he sometimes admonished of their duty with a degree of freedom which must have excited the keenest resentment. The king being one day surrounded by a numerous train of nobility and prelates, Lindsay approached him with due reverence, and began to prefer a humble petition that he would instal him in an office that was then vacant. "I have," said he, "servit your grace lang, and luik to be rewardit as others are; and now your maister taylor, at the pleasure of God, is departit, wherefor I would desire of your grace to bestow this little benefite upon me." The king replied that he

was amazed at such a request from a man who could neither shape nor sew. "Sir," rejoined the poet, "that maks nae matter; for you have given bishoprics and benefices to mony standing here about you, and yet they can nouthier teche nor preche: and why not I as weill be your taylor, thocht I can nouthier shape nor sew; seeing teching and preaching are nae less requisite to their vocation than shaping and sewing to ane taylor?" James immediately perceived the object of his petition, and diverted himself at the expense of the enraged ecclesiastics.

Lindsay's hostility to the Church of Rome is, indeed, generally considered as the principal source of his disappointments. The Reformation was now advancing with gradual steps; and at an early stage of its progress he had boldly avowed his attachment. "The Scotch," says Warton, "with that philosophical and speculative cast which characterises their national genius, were more zealous and early friends to a reformation of religion than their neighbours in England. The pomp and elegance of the Catholic worship made no impression on a people whose devotion sought only for solid gratification, and who had no notion that the interposition of the senses could with any propriety be admitted to co-operate in an exercise of such a nature, which appealed to reason alone, and seemed to exclude all aids of the imagination."

To the consummation of this glorious undertaking, the literary compositions and personal consequence of Lindsay seem to have contributed with powerful effect. His writings tended to prepare the public mind for a systematic attempt toward the overthrow of papal superstition, and the establishment of the rational doctrines and forms of the Reformation. He is enumerated among those who, in 1547, counselled the ordination of John Knox, in whom his penetration must readily have discovered that energy of mind which qualified him for the arduous task he was destined to perform. "In fact," says Pinkerton, "Sir David was more the reformer of Scotland than John Knox; for he had prepared the ground, and John only sowed the seed." Indeed, his works were so odious to the clergy, that by an Act of Assembly in 1558 they were ordered to be publicly burned; so that there is perhaps not one of the numerous editions through which they have passed that preserves the genuine text of the author.\*

After the death of James V. in 1541, Lindsay is said to have enjoyed a degree of favour with the Earl of Arran; but having been deprived of this by means of a court intrigue, he retired to his country seat, where he lived tranquil and respected till the end of 1553, when he died at the age of sixty.

\* The best edition is that by Chalmers, 1806.

In the works of Sir David Lindsay we do not often find either the splendid diction of Dunbar or the prolific imagination of Gawin Douglas; perhaps, indeed, his *Dream* is the only composition which can be cited as uniformly poetical; but his harmony, his good sense, his perfect knowledge of courts and of the world, the facility of his versification, and, above all, his peculiar talent of adapting himself to readers of all denominations, will continue to secure him a considerable share of that popularity for which he was originally indebted to the religious opinions he professed, no less than to his poetical merit. The *Dream* is a vision in which an allegorical lady, after transporting the poet successively to the infernal regions, to purgatory, through the earth, fire, water, and air, and showing him Paradise, brings him back to the cavern where he had fallen asleep, and where he is awakened by the noise of a ship firing a broadside. The poem, usually called the *Monarchy*, is a sort of abstract of universal history, in question and answer, the interlocutors being Experience and a Courtier. The most pleasing of this author's works, however, is *The History of Squire Meldrum*: the romantic and singular but authentic character of the hero is painted with great strength and simplicity; and the versification possesses a degree of facility and elegance at least equal to the most polished compositions of Drayton.

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#### SIR RICHARD MAITLAND.

(1496-1586.)

Richard Maitland, a cultivator as well as preserver of Scottish poetry, was the son of William Maitland of Lethington, and of Martha his wife, the daughter of George Lord Seaton. He was born in 1496. Having finished his course of literature and philosophy in the University of St. Andrew's, he visited France, in order to prosecute the study of the laws. After his return to Scotland, he recommended himself to the favour of James V.; and in 1554 we find him an extraordinary lord of session. Sir John Scot affirms, that under the regency of Mary of Guise, Sir Richard Maitland was appointed lord privy seal; and it is certain, from his congratulatory ode on her daughter's arrival in Scotland, that he had borne some office. As early at least as 1561, Maitland was deprived of his sight; but this misfortune did not incapacitate him for business. In 1561 he was admitted an ordinary lord of session, by the title of Lethington; and in 1562 was also nominated lord privy seal and a member

of the privy council. His office as keeper of the seal he resigned, in 1567, in favour of his second son. In 1583 the lords of session had granted him immunity and license to attend when he pleased, having all commodities as if he were present; yet moved in conscience, lest justice should be retarded by his absence, he, in the following year, resigned in favour of Sir Lewis Ballenden. Sir Richard died on the 20th of March, 1586, at the age of ninety. His wife, a daughter of Thomas Crauston of Carsby, died on the day of his interment. His eldest son, Sir William, was the famous secretary of Queen Mary. A younger son, Thomas Maitland, is less remembered on account of his Latin poems (printed in the *Delitiæ Poetarum Scotorum*) than as one of the interlocutors in the exquisite dialogue of Buchanan, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*.

Sir Richard Maitland is celebrated as a man of learning, talents, and virtue. His compositions breathe the genuine spirit of poetry and benevolence. Poetry he did not begin to cultivate until he had nearly attained his sixtieth year. In his works of this kind, it would be therefore unreasonable to expect the effervescence of a youthful imagination, or the perpetual scintillations of a lively fancy. They are not, however, incapable of exciting interest; they present us with the thoughts, serious and gay, of an amiable old man habituated to courts, and accurately acquainted with men and manners. His poem on *The Creation and Paradyce Lost* was printed in Allan Ramsay's *Ever-Green*. A considerable number of his productions are to be found in Pinkerton's *Ancient Scottish Poems*, and many more remain unpublished.

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#### JAMES V. KING OF SCOTLAND.\*

(1512-1542.)

James V. was born on the 10th April, 1512; he was the son of James IV. by Margaret, the illustrious daughter of Henry VII. James V. lost his father on Flodden Field, upon the 9th September, 1513, on which disastrous day James IV. maintained the bloody conflict till he was actually cut in pieces. Deranged as the government of Scotland had often been by the infancy of her sovereigns, there now ensued a minority which was protracted beyond precedent, and turbulent beyond example. His mother, who was of a vigorous but intriguing character, assumed the administration, having Beaton, the archbishop of Glasgow, and the Earls of Angus, Huntly, and Arran, for her assessors. But she confided the education of her infant son to Gawyn Dunbar, Prior Whithorn, a person of learning and



merit, who rose by his conduct, amid great competition, to be archbishop of Glasgow.

At the age of twelve, James was called to the administration of the government by the intrigues of his mother, and brought from Stirling to Edinburgh, where he was proclaimed king, amid the acclamations of the people. This event happened on the 26th July, 1524.

His authority did not last long. A few months saw him placed in the interested hands of the Earl of Angus and his creatures, who flattered the king with deceptive liberty, while they retained their sovereign in real thralldom. Various intrigues were carried on, and some battles were fought for his relief; but the fortune of Angus, who had married his mother, always prevailed.

It was not till May 1545 that the king, who had accomplished his sixteenth year, made his escape from the fangs of the Douglasses at Falkland to his mother's castle at Stirling. The secrecy and artifice wherewith this escape was contrived, and the address with which it was effected, evince that James IV. and the daughter of Henry VII. had stamped a very vigorous character on James V. He appears now to have assumed the government of his people. He soon after assembled the states of his kingdom in Stirling Castle, and declared that he would not be ruled by any one family, but be governed by the advice of his nobles. Angus was now attainted, and found shelter in England.



LOCH-LEVEN.

James married (his second wife) Mary of Lorraine, widow of Longueville, who brought him several sons and a daughter, the latter of whom alone survived him as the ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots. From the epoch of his marriage he seems to have dedicated his days to foreign relations, to his warlike propensities, and his nights to jollity. But he only found disappointments, with vanity and vexation of spirit. A broken heart seems to have ended in a fever, which closed his career on the 14th December, 1542, at Falkland Castle.

This prince (whose character for wit and libertinism bears a great resemblance to that of his gay successor, Charles II.) was noted for travelling about his dominions disguised as a tinker or beggar, and for his frequent gallantries with country girls. Two adventures of this kind he is said to have celebrated in the two poems which have procured him a place in these volumes—the *Gaberlunzie Man* and the *Jolly Beggar*. The poem of *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, generally ascribed to James I. of Scotland, is by Bishop Tanner and Bishop Percy given to James V.

## GEORGE BUCHANAN.

(1506-1582.)

“George Buchanan, the most celebrated of the learned men of his time, of all the famous writers that Scotland hath produced, being in his prose both elegant and judicious (insomuch that Vossius, selecting out from several countries each of their prime historians, names him for the history of his own country); and for verse, if not the chief of modern Latin poets, as some account him, yet at least the chief of that nation; which however barren of soil esteemed, yet hath been sufficiently fruitful of good wits, and even famous, particularly for Latin verse.”

The poet thus heralded by Edward Phillips, not improbably in the words of Milton, was George Buchanan, born in the parish of Kellorne, in Lenoxshire, Scotland, in February 1506. His family, which was never very rich, was, soon after the birth of this son, reduced to great straits by the bankruptcy of his grandfather and the death of his father, who left a widow with five sons and three daughters, whom nevertheless she brought up by her prudent management. Her brother, Mr. James Heriot, observing a promising genius in George when at school, sent him to Paris for his education; but in two years the death of his uncle, and his own bad state of health and want of money, forced him to return. About a year after he made a campaign with the French auxiliaries, in which he suffered so many

hardships that he was confined to his bed by sickness all the ensuing winter. Early in the spring he went to St. Andrew's to learn logic under Mr. John Mair, whom he followed in the summer to Paris. Here he embraced the Lutheran tenets, which at that time began to spread; and after struggling for nearly two years with ill fortune, he went, in 1526, to teach grammar in the college of St. Barbe, which he did for two years and a half. The young Earl of Cassilis meeting with him, took a liking to his conversation, and valuing his parts, kept him with him for five years, and then carried him into Scotland. Upon the earl's death, about two years after, Buchanan was preparing to return to France to resume his studies; but King James V. detained him, to be preceptor to his natural son James, afterwards the famous earl of Murray, regent of Scotland. Some sarcasms thrown out against the Franciscan friars, in a poem entitled *Somnium*, which Buchanan had written to pass an idle hour, so highly exasperated them, that they represented him as an atheist. This served only to increase that dislike which he had already conceived against them on account of their irregularities. Some time after, the king having discovered a conspiracy against his person, in which he was persuaded some of the Franciscans were concerned, commanded Buchanan to write a poem against them. Our poet, unwilling to disoblige either the king or the friars, wrote a few verses susceptible of a double interpretation. But the king was displeased because they were not severe enough, and the others held it a capital offence so much as to mention them other than to their honour. The king ordered him to write verses more poignant, which gave occasion to the piece entitled *Franciscanus*. Soon after, being informed by his friends at court that the monks sought his life, and that Cardinal Beaton had given the king a sum of money to have him executed, he fled to England. But things being there in such an uncertain state that Lutherans and papists were burnt in the same fire on the same day, whilst Henry VIII. studied more his own safety than the purity of religion, he went over to France. On his arrival at Paris, he found his inveterate enemy Cardinal Beaton at that court, in the character of ambassador; wherefore he retired privately to Bordeaux, at the invitation of Andrew Govianus, a learned Portuguese. He taught in the public school lately erected there three years; in which time he wrote four tragedies, afterwards occasionally published. The *Baptista* was the first written, though it was the last published, and then the *Medea* of Euripides. He wrote them to comply with the rules of the school, which every year demanded a new fable; and his aim in choosing these subjects was to draw off the youth of France as much as possible from the allegories which were then greatly in vogue, to an

imitation of the ancients, in which he succeeded beyond his hopes. Meanwhile Cardinal Beaton sent letters to the archbishop of Bordeaux to cause him to be apprehended ; but these luckily fell into the hands of some of Buchanan's friends, who prevented their effect. Not long after he went into Portugal with Govianus, who had received orders from the king his master to bring him a certain number of men able to teach philosophy and classical learning in the university he had lately established at Coimbra. Every thing went well whilst Govianus lived ; but after his death, which happened the year following, the learned men who followed him, and particularly Buchanan, who was a foreigner and had few friends, suffered every kind of ill-usage.

After cavilling with him a year and a half, his enemies, that they might not be accused of groundlessly harassing a man of reputation, sent him to a monastery for some months, to be better instructed by the monks. It was chiefly at this time that he translated the Psalms of David into Latin verse. In July 1554 he published his tragedy of *Jephtha*, with a dedication to Charles de Cossi, marshal of France ; with which the marshal was so much pleased, that the year following he sent for Buchanan into Piedmont, and made him preceptor to his son. Buchanan spent five years with this youth, employing his leisure hours in the study of the Scriptures, that he might be the better able to judge of the controversies which at that time divided the Christian world. He returned to Scotland in 1563, and joined the reformed church in that kingdom. In the beginning of 1565 he went again to France, whence he was recalled the year following by Mary Queen of Scots, who had fixed upon him to be preceptor to her son, when that prince should be of a proper age to be put under his care, and in the meantime made him principal of St. Leonard's college in the University of St. Andrew's, where he resided four years. But upon the misfortunes of that queen, he joined the party of the Earl of Murray, by whose order he wrote his *Detection*, reflecting on the queen's character and conduct. He was by the states of the kingdom appointed preceptor to the young king James VI. He employed the last twelve or thirteen years of his life in writing the history of his country, in which he happily united the force and brevity of Sallust with the perspicuity and elegance of Livy. He died at Edinburgh, the 28th of February, 1582, aged 76.

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## SIR THOMAS WYAT.

(1503-1541.)

Sir Thomas Wyatt, the only son of Sir Henry Wyatt of Allington Castle, Kent, was born 1503. His father was imprisoned in the Tower in the reign of Richard III., where he is said to have been preserved by a cat, which fed him while in that place; for which reason he was always pictured with a cat in his arms, or beside him.

After being educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and at Christ Church, Oxford, young Wyatt travelled for some time on the Continent; and then returned a gentleman of such high accomplishments, elegant manners, and conversational talents, as to attract the attention of all ranks, and particularly of his sovereign, who knighted him, and employed him in several embassies.

In him is said to have been combined the wit of Sir Thomas More and the wisdom of Sir Thomas Cromwell. It is no small confirmation of this character, that his friend Surrey describes him as of "a visage stern and mild."

We are told that he brought about the Reformation by a *bon-mot*, and precipitated the fall of Wolsey by a seasonable story. When the king was perplexed respecting his divorce from Queen Catherine, which he affected to regard as a matter of conscience, Sir Thomas exclaimed, "Lord! that a man cannot repent of his sin without the Pope's leave!" The story by which he promoted the fall of Wolsey has not descended to our times. Lloyd merely says that when the king happened to be displeased with Wolsey, "Sir Thomas ups with the story of the curs baiting the butcher's dog, which contained the whole method of that great man's ruin."

Sir Thomas was much courted for his splendid entertainments; his knowledge of the world; his discernment in discovering men of talent, and his readiness to encourage them; and for the interest he was known to possess at court. It became a proverb, when any person received preferment, that "he had been in Sir Thomas Wyatt's closet."

Amidst this prosperity he had the misfortune, like most of the eminent persons of his time, to fall under the severe displeasure of the king, and was twice imprisoned. Fuller tells us he "fell into disfavour about the business of Queen Anne Bullen;" and some have gone so far as to accuse him of an amour with that queen. But he himself expressly imputes his first imprisonment to Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk. His second misfortune arose from the villany of Bonner, bishop of London, whose clownish manners, lewd behaviour, want of religion,

and malicious perversion of truth, Sir Thomas paints with equal humour and asperity. The charges against him he repelled with great spirit, ease, and candour. He was tried before a committee of the council, and probably acquitted, as we find that he regained the confidence of the king, and was afterwards sent ambassador to the emperor. His eagerness to execute this commission, whatever it was, proved fatal; for riding fast in the heat of summer, he was attacked by a malignant fever, of which he died at Sherborne in Dorsetshire, 1541.

Sir Thomas was closely allied with Lord Surrey by friendship and similarity of taste and studies. His poems were first published by Tottle, with Lord Surrey's. The authenticity of Surrey's and Wyatt's poems seems to be confirmed by this care of Tottle to distinguish what he knew from what he did not know. He contributed but little to the refinement of English poetry, and his versification and language are deficient in harmony and perspicuity. From a close study of the Italian poets, his imagination dwells too often on puerile conceits. As a lover, his addresses are stately and pedantic, with very little mixture of feeling or passion; and although detached beauties may be pointed out in a few of his sonnets, his genius was ill adapted to this species of poetry. In all respects he is inferior to his friend Surrey, and claims a place in the English series of poets chiefly as being the first polished satirist, and as having represented the vices and follies of his time in the true spirit of the didactic muse.

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#### JOHN KAYE. POETS LAUREATE.

(Circa 1506.)

The first mention of a king's poet, under the appellation of Laureate, occurs in the reign of Edward IV., by whom John Kaye was appointed to that office. It happens, however, singularly enough, that this proto-poet-laureate has left no pieces of poetry to prove his pretensions to his laureateship. The only composition he has transmitted to posterity is a prose English translation of a Latin history of the siege of Rhodes. In the dedication of this translation (printed 1506), addressed to King Edward, or rather in the title, Kaye styles himself *hys humble Poete Laureate*.

Great confusion has entered into this subject of poet-laureateship, on account of the degrees in grammar (which included rhetoric and versification) anciently taken in our universities, particularly at Oxford; on which occasion a wreath of laurel was presented to the new

graduate, who was afterwards styled *Poeta Laureatus*. These scholastic laureations seem to have given rise to the appellation in question. John Skelton, afterwards poet-laureate to Henry VIII., was created university poet-laureate at Oxford in 1489 or 1490, and at Cambridge in 1493. In March 1512, Edward Watson, a student in grammar, obtained a concession to be graduated and laureated in that science, on condition that he composed one hundred Latin verses in praise of the university, or a Latin comedy. He obtained the concession on the 18th of the same month.

Another grammarian, Richard Smith, was distinguished with the same badge in 1513, after having stipulated that, at the next public act, he would affix the same number of hexameters on the great gates of St. Mary's Church, that they might be seen by the whole university. This was at that period the most convenient mode of publication.

One Maurice Byrchynshaw, a scholar in rhetoric, supplicated, in the same year, to be admitted to read lectures—that is, to take a degree in that faculty; and his petition was granted, with the provision that he should write one hundred verses on the glory of the university, and not suffer Ovid's *Art of Love* and the *Elegies* of Pamphilus to be studied by his auditory. In the same year, also, John Bulman, another rhetorician, having complied with the terms imposed, of explaining the first book of Tully's *Offices*, and likewise the first of his *Epistles*, without any pecuniary emolument, was graduated in rhetoric, and a crown of laurel was publicly placed on his head by the chancellor of the university.

With regard to the poet-laureate of the kings of England—an officer of the court remaining under that title to this day—he is undoubtedly the same that is entitled the *King's Versifier*, and to whom one hundred shillings were paid as an annual stipend in the year 1251; but when or how that title commenced, and whether this officer was ever solemnly crowned with laurel at his first investiture, we may not pretend to determine, after the researches of the learned Selden on this subject have proved unsuccessful. It seems most probable that the barbarous and inglorious name of *Versifier* gradually gave way to an appellation of more elegance and dignity; or rather, that at length those only were in general invited to this appointment who had received academical sanction, and had merited a crown of laurel in the universities for their abilities in Latin composition, particularly Latin versification. Thus the king's laureate was nothing more than a graduated rhetorician employed in the service of the king. That he originally wrote in Latin, Mr. Warton infers from the ancient title '*Versificator*,' and may be, moreover, collected from the two Latin poems

which Gulielmus and Baston (who appear to have respectively acted in the capacity of royal poets to Richard I. and Edward II.) officially composed on Richard's crusade and Edward's siege of Stirling Castle.

Andrew Bernard, successively poet-laureate to Henry VII. and Henry VIII., affords a still stronger proof that this officer was a Latin scholar. He was an Augustine monk, and not only the king's poet-laureate, as it is supposed, but his historiographer, and preceptor in grammar to Prince Arthur. He obtained many ecclesiastical preferments in England. All the pieces now to be found which he wrote in the character of poet-laureate are in Latin. He has left some Latin hymns; and many of his Latin prose pieces, which he wrote in the quality of historiographer to both monarchs, are remaining. An instrument relating to his laureateship, dated 1486, has no specification of any thing to be done *officially* by Bernard. The king merely grants to Andrew Bernard, *Poete-Laureato* (which we may construe *Laureated Poet*, or a *Poet-Laureate*), a salary of ten marks till he can obtain some equivalent appointment. Gower and Chaucer are by some writers said to have been poets laureate; but this was certainly not the fact. Skelton (himself a laureate), in his *Croune of Laurell*, sees Gower, Chaucer, and Lydgate approach. He describes their whole apparel as glittering with the richest precious stones, and then immediately adds, "They wanted nothing but the *laurell*."

Mr. Warton is of opinion that it was not customary for the royal laureate to write in English till the reformation of religion had begun to diminish the veneration for the Latin language; or rather till the love of novelty and a better sense of things had banished the narrow pedantries of monastic erudition, and taught us to cultivate our native tongue.

The birthday of William III., in 1694, appears to have been *officially* celebrated by Tate, whom Rowe succeeded in the laureateship; and from the year 1718 a regular series may almost be traced of birthday and new-year odes. Warton, who, in his *History of Poetry*, laments "taste and genius as idly wasted on the most splendid subjects, when imposed by constraint and perpetually repeated," gave an historical dignity and a splendour of poetical diction to those he composed, which would hardly, as Mr. Park truly observes, leave a reader to conceive that the subjects were "imposed by constraint." His predecessor Whitehead strongly felt the irksome force of this constraint.

Mr. Southey condescended to dignify the office of poet-laureate on the death of "Poet Pye" in 1813. It has since been certainly not less honoured in the person of Mr. Wordsworth; and the laurel now



circles (1854) the brow of one of the finest poets of any age or country, Alfred Tennyson.

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### WALTER KENNEDY.

(Circa 1480.)

Walter Kennedy seems to be represented by Dunbar and Lindsay as one of the chiefs of the Scottish poets. From his *Flyting* (a scolding satire) on Dunbar himself, he appears to have been a native of the district formerly known by the name of Carrick. During his altercation with Dunbar, he takes occasion to remind his antagonist of his own "land, store, and stakkis," so that we may assume him to have been a man of substance; and from the same poem we learn that he was the king's "trew and special clerk," whatever *special* clerkship that may indicate. His works have all perished except his *Flyting* and his *Invective against Mouththankless*, preserved by Ramsay, and his *Praise of Aige*, printed by Lord Hailes, who considers that it gives a favourable idea of Kennedy as a versifier.

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### QUINTYN SCHAW.

(Circa 1480.)

Quintyn Schaw is mentioned by Dunbar and Lindsay as a Scottish poet of eminence. Kennedy styles him "his cousine Quintene and his commissar." He was probably a native of the same district. Of his works only one specimen remains, *Advice to a Courtier*. Quintyn's style seems to have been easy and familiar; but having begun his poem with an idea of the resemblance between the life of a courtier and that of a mariner, he has introduced so many sea-phrases and maritime allusions as to render his language almost unintelligible.

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### JOHN BALE.

(1495-1563.)

John Bale was born in 1495, at Cove, a small village in Suffolk, about five miles from Dunwich. His parents being in poor circumstances, and encumbered with a large family, he was entered at twelve years of age in the monastery of Carmelites at Norwich, and thence removed to Jesus College at Cambridge. He was bred up in

the Romish religion, but became afterwards a Protestant. His conversion greatly exposed him to the persecution of the Romish clergy, and he must have felt their resentment had he not been protected by Lord Cromwell. But upon the death of this nobleman Bale was obliged to fly to Holland, where he remained six years, during which time he wrote several pieces in the English language. He was recalled into England by Edward IV., and presented to the living of Bishops-Stoke, in the county of Southampton. On the 15th of August, 1532, he was nominated to the see of Ossory by King Edward VI. Upon his arrival in Ireland he used his utmost endeavours to reform the manners of his diocese, to correct the vicious practices of the priests, to abolish the mass, and to establish the use of the new Book of Common Prayer set forth in England; but all his schemes of this kind having proved abortive by the death of King Edward and the accession of Queen Mary, he became greatly exposed to the outrages of the papists in Ireland: once in particular we are told that five of his domestics were murdered whilst they were making hay in a meadow near his house; and having received intimations that the priests were plotting his death, he retired from his see to Dublin. He afterwards made his escape in a small vessel from that port, but was taken by the captain of a Dutch man-of-war, who stripped him of all his money and effects; and when he arrived in Holland, he was obliged to pay thirty pounds before he could procure his liberty. From Holland he retired to Basil in Switzerland, where he continued during the reign of Queen Mary.

On the accession of Queen Elizabeth he returned from exile, but did not choose to go again to Ireland, being satisfied with a prebend of Canterbury, in which city he died, Nov. 1563, being then in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and was buried in the cathedral of that place.

This prelate left us, besides *The Lives of the most eminent Writers of Great Britain, from Japhet to 1557*, and infinite prose works (in Latin) of all kinds, many productions in verse, as *The Life of John the Baptist*, 1530; *John Baptist Preaching*; *Christ's Temptation*; interludes; *Christ at twelve years old*; *God's Promises*, 1538; and many other scriptural interludes.

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#### NICHOLAS UDALL.

(Born circa 1506.)

Nicholas Udall, born in Hampshire, about 1506, after matriculating, in 1520, at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and proceeding M.A.

and probationary fellow, 3d September 1527, became master of Eton school, where he was celebrated alike for his learning and his extreme severity. Thomas Tusser, one of his boys, complains that, at one chastisement, he received fifty-three stripes from the doctor's rod. He appears, in his clerical character, to have accommodated himself to the constant changes of religion that marked his age, with a facility equal to that of the noted Vicar of Bray. His writings are, a sort of dramatic pageant to celebrate the entrance of Anne Boleyn into London after her marriage; a preface to the translation of Erasmus's *Paraphrase of St. John* by Queen Mary, in which, of course, he much extols her distinguished proficiency in literature; and a number of English *Interludes*, written probably for his scholars: it having been, according to the consuetudinary of Eton school, the practice that, "about the feast of St. Andrew, the thirtieth day of November, the master shall choose, according to his own discretion, such Latin stage-plays as are most excellent and convenient, which the boys are to act in the following Christmas holidays, before a public audience, and with all the elegance of scenery and ornaments usual at the performance of a play. Yet he may sometimes order English plays; such, at least, as are smart and witty." It was probably to furnish his amateur players with something "smart and witty" for the ensuing Christmas performance, that, conjecturally about 1531, he composed *Ralph Roister Doister*, a play which, since its recent discovery, supersedes *Gammer Gurton's Needle* in the position of the first *regular* English comedy. This very curious and very entertaining play, first printed anonymously in 1566, came to light in 1818, when a limited number of copies were published by the Rev. Mr. Briggs. It has since been ably edited for the Shakspeare Society by Mr. Durrant Cooper.

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#### THOMAS STERNHOLD.

(Died 1549.)

Thomas Sternhold, a poet ever to be remembered, by all parish-clerks especially, for his version of King David's Psalms, was born in Hampshire, as Mr. Wood thinks; but he is not sure. He is less sure whether he was educated, as some supposed, at Wykeham's school near Winchester; but very sure that, after spending some time at Oxford, he left the university without a degree. He then repaired to the court of Henry VIII., was made groom of the robes to him, and had a hundred marks bequeathed to him by the will of that king. He continued in the same office under Edward VI., and

was in some esteem at court for his vein in poetry. Being a most zealous reformer and a very strict liver, he became so scandalised at the lascivious warblings there, that he turned into English metre one-and-fifty of David's Psalms, and caused musical notes to be set to them. He flattered himself that the courtiers would sing them instead of their loose and wanton sonnets; but Mr. Wood is of opinion that very few of them did so. However, the poetry and music being thought admirable in those times, they were gradually introduced into all parochial churches and sung, as they continue to be in the far greater part at present, notwithstanding the version since made by Tate and Brady, and countenanced by royal authority in 1696. Eight-and-fifty other Psalms were turned into English metre by John Hopkins, a contemporary writer, and styled by Bale *Britannicorum poetarum sui temporis non infimus*. The rest were done by other hands. We do not find that Mr. Sternhold composed any other poetry, and the specimen we have gives us no room to lament that he did not; however, let us commend his piety. He died in London in the year 1549.



## JOHN BELLENDEN.

(Died 1550.)

John Bellenden, a Scottish poet of the age of Sir David Lindsay, archdeacon of Murray and canon of Ross, was on a confidential footing with James V. ; and his *Historie of Scotland*, a free translation of the first seventeen books of Hector Boece's Chronicle, was undertaken at the request of that monarch, himself ignorant of the Latin language. Into this publication Bellenden has introduced two poems of considerable length, entitled the *Proheme of the Cosmographie* and the *Proheme of the Historie*. Bellenden went to Rome,—conjecturally to get out of the way of the reformers, whom he strenuously opposed,—and died there in 1550.

His poems are the effusions of a fine fancy and a cultivated taste. He has been extolled as a master of every branch of divine and human learning ; and it is at least apparent that his literature was such as his contemporaries did not very frequently surpass.

## HENRY BRADSHAW.

(Circa 1500.)

Henry Bradshaw, a native of Cheshire, after having been educated at Gloucester College, Oxford, became a Benedictine monk of St. Werburgh's Abbey, in his native city. Before the year 1500 he wrote the *Life of St. Werburgh* (a daughter of a king of the Mercians), in English verse. This poem, besides the devout deeds and passions of the poet's patroness saint, comprehends a variety of other subjects,—a description of the kingdom of the Mercians, the lives of St. Etheldred and St. Sixburgh, the foundation of the city of Chester. Bradshaw was buried in the cathedral church to which his convent was annexed, in the year 1513.

## — WEDDERBURN.

(Circa 1550.)

A very singular collection of religious Scottish poems, under the title of *Ane Compendious Booke of Godlie and Spirituall Songs, collectit out of sundrie partes of the Scripture, with sundrie of other Ballates, changed out of prophane Songes, for avoyding of Sinne and Harlotrie*, was published in the year 1597, and reprinted by Andrew Hart

in the year 1602. The last edition informs us that these songs "have been ascribed to one Wedderburn, of whom we know little." But there were three brothers of that name, all endowed with a poetical talent. The eldest wrote tragedies and comedies. The second was a Catholic, who turned Protestant. Being persecuted as a heretic by the clergy, he fled to Germany, where he heard Luther and Melancthon. He translated many of Luther's principles into Scottish verse, and changed many obscene songs and rhymes into hymns; anticipating herein our Wesley, who did much the same thing, protesting that he did not see why the devil should have all the pretty tunes to himself. After the death of James V., he returned to Scotland; but having been again accused of heresy, he fled into England, where he probably died about the year 1556. The third brother was vicar of Dundee, and in learning is said to have surpassed the other two. He went to Paris, and there associated with the reformers. At Cardinal Beaton's death he returned to his native country. "He turned the tunes and tenour of many profane ballads into godly songs and hymns, which were called the *Psalms of Dundee*, whereby he stirred up the affections of many." He died in prison.

One of the Wedderburns was most probably the author of the *Complaint of Scotland*, a curious specimen of Scottish prose.

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### JOHN HEYWOOD.

(Circa 1500, died 1565.)

John Heywood, commonly called the Epigrammatist, was born at North Mimms, in Hertfordshire, or, at all events, resided there for some portion of his life. The year of his birth is not known; but he began to write his interludes about 1530. "These productions," observes Collier, "form an epoch in the history of our drama, as they are neither miracle-plays nor morals, but entirely different from both; several of them come properly within the definition of interludes,—pieces played in the interval of entertainments,—and have frequently both broad humour and strong character to recommend them." He was educated at Pembroke College (then called Broadgate Hall), Oxford; but the severity of an academical life (says Wood) not suiting his gay and airy temper, he retired to London, and became known to all the men of wit, and especially to Sir Thomas More, with whom he was very familiar. His humour and his skill in vocal and instrumental music recommended him to Henry VIII., and he was well rewarded by that monarch. He was afterwards

equally valued by Queen Mary ; and had often the honour to mitigate the sullen solemnity of that melancholy princess with his songs, his rhymes, and his jests. One of these is preserved in the Cotton mss. "When Queene Marie tolde Heywoode that the priestes must foregoe their wives, he merrily answered, 'Then your grace must allow them *lemmans*; for the clergie cannot live without *sauce*.'" Nor was the solace of Heywood's pleasantries monopolised by royalty. "At the duke of Northumberland's board," Puttenham tells us, "merry John Heywood was allowed to sit at the table's end. The duke had a very noble and honourable mind always to pay his debts well ; and whenever he lacked money, would not stick to sell the greatest part of his plate—so had he done a few days before. Heywood being loath to call for his drink so often as he was dry, turned his eye towards the cupboard, and said, 'I find great miss of your grace's standing cups.' The duke, thinking he had spoken this of some knowledge that his plate was lately sold, said, somewhat sharply, 'Why, sir, will not these cups serve as good a man as yourself?' Heywood readily replied, 'Yes, if it please your grace ; but I would have one of them stand still at mine elbow, full of drinke, that I might not be driven to trouble your men so often to call for it.' This pleasant and speedy turn of the former words helped all the matter again ; whereupon the duke became very pleasant, and drank a bowl of wine to Heywood, and bad a cup should be always standing by him."

After the death of Queen Mary, finding the Protestant interest in the ascendant, he manifested the honesty of his religious devotion by withdrawing to Mechlin, where he died about 1565. "His zeal, however, on this head, does not seem," writes Hazlitt, "to have blinded his judgment, or to have prevented him from using the utmost freedom and severity in lashing the abuses of popery, at which he seems to have looked 'with the malice of a fiend.' The *Four P's* bear the date of 1547. It is very curious as an evidence both of the wit, the manners, and the opinions of the time. Each of the parties in the dialogue gives an account of the boasted advantages of his own particular calling,—that is, of the frauds which he practises on credulity and ignorance,—and is laughed at by the others in turn. In fact, they all of them strive to outbrave each other, till the contest becomes a jest, and it ends in a wager who shall tell the greatest lie, and the prize is adjudged to him who says that he has found a patient woman. The common superstitions here recorded, in civil and religious matters, are almost incredible ; and the chopped logic which was the fashion of the times, and which comes in aid of the author's shrewd and pleasant sallies to expose them, is highly entertaining."

Heywood's other chief productions are, 2. *The Play of Love the*

*Play of the Weather* (1533); 3. *A merry Play between the Pardoner and the Frere, the Curate and Neighbour Pratte* (1533); 4. *Play of Gentleness and Nobilitie*; 5. *A merry Play between Johan the Husband, Tyb the Wyfe, and Sir Johan the Prieste* (1533); 6. *A Dialogue containyng in effect the number of al the proverbes in the English tongue compact, in a matter concerning two marriages* (1547); 7. *The Spider and the Flie* (1556), a long, dull, parabolic tale in defence of popery. Before the title is the portrait of the author at full length, printed from a wooden cut: he has a fur gown on, like that of a master of arts, but the bottom of the sleeves reaches no lower than his knees; on his head is a round cap, his chin and lips are close shaved, and he has a dagger hanging at his girdle.

## THOMAS TUSSEK.

(Circa 1515-1582.)

Thomas Tussek, the British Varro, was born about the year 1515, at Rivenhall, near Witham, in Essex.

At an early age, notwithstanding his own reluctance and his mother's tears, his father put him to a music-school; and he was soon placed as a chorister, or singing-boy, in the collegiate chapel of the castle of Wallingford, which consisted of a dean, six prebendaries, six clerks, and four choristers, and was dissolved in 1549. In this situation he pathetically laments the hardships he endured; but having a fine voice, he was pressed (as was the despotic practice of the times) for the service of one of the choirs; and after being banished about from one place to another, which loss of time he mentions with regret, it was his good fortune at length to be admitted into St. Paul's, where he arrived at considerable proficiency in music.

From St. Paul's he was sent to Eton School, and was certainly some time under the tuition of the famous Nicholas Udall, and of whose severity Tussek complains in giving him fifty-three stripes at once,

" For fault but small,  
Or none at all."

Thence he was removed to Cambridge; and, according to some, was first entered of King's College, and afterwards removed to Trinity Hall.

After encountering a long sickness, which obliged him to discontinue his studies, he left the banks of the Cam, and was employed about court, probably in his musical capacity, by the influence of his



patron, William Lord Paget, in whose family he appears to have been a retainer, and whom he mentions in the highest terms of panegyric.

In this situation, which must have been during the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII. and the first years of Edward VI., when his patron was in great favour, he remained ten years; but being disgusted with the vices, and harassed with the contentions of the courtiers, or, what is more probable, finding, to use his own words, "the court began to frown," he retired into the country, and marrying, embraced the profession of a farmer, at Catiwade, Suffolk, near the river Stour. Here he "devised" or composed his book of *Husbandry*, the first edition of which was published in 1557.

It is probable that he must have been acquainted with rural affairs for several years at least, before he could produce even the rude essay which forms the germ of his future and more enlarged work. In it, indeed, we find a correct outline of agriculture, which could only be drawn by a practical hand; "the laying on of the colours, however, was the fruit of more ample experience and observation."

The ill state of his wife's health, together with the too-probable embarrassments of his affairs, and a restless disposition, at length induced him to change his situation; and we find him successively at Ipswich, where he lost his wife, at West Dereham, and at Norwich.

Soon after the loss of his first wife, he married a second, of the name of Moon, on which changeable planet he plays by contrasting it with the object of his choice. It may be fairly inferred from his own words, that his happiness was not permanently promoted by this match. He seems to complain of the charges incident "to a wife in youth;" and had she transmitted her real thoughts to posterity, we should probably have heard some insinuations against an old husband.

The patrons of Tusser in Norfolk were, Sir Richard Southwell, and afterwards Salisbury dean of Norwich, who probably procured him the place of singing-man in the cathedral.

Again he commenced as tithe-farmer at Fairsted, in the vicinity of his native place; but his mind was too liberal, and he was too little a match for the artifices of his vulgar brethren to thrive in this vocation; and in consequence he retired to London.

The plague, however, raging here in 1574, and more particularly in the following year, he sought refuge in Cambridge.

When the danger vanished, it is likely that Tusser's predilection for London returned; and he died there, according to the best authorities, about 1580. His remains were interred in St. Mildred's church in the Poultry; and the following epitaph, according to

Stowe, recorded his memory. It is perfectly in character with the man and his writings; and, if conjecture may be allowed, was penned by himself :

“ Here Thomas Tusser, clad in earth, doth lie,  
 Who sometimes made the points in husbandry :  
 By him then learn thou mayst ; here learn we must ;  
 When all is done, we sleep, and turn to dust :  
 And yet, through Christ, to heaven we hope to go ;  
 Who reads his books shall find his faith was so.”

“ Without a tincture of careless imprudence,” says Warton, “ or vicious extravagance, this desultory character seems to have thrived in no vocation.” Fuller quaintly observes, “ that his stone, which gathered no moss, was the stone of Sisyphus.”

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#### SIR THOMAS CHALONER.

(Circa 1515-1565.)

Thomas Chaloner, born in London about the year 1515, was descended from an ancient family of Denbigh, in Wales. He studied at both universities. Having accompanied Sir Henry Knyvet, ambassador from Henry VIII. to the Emperor Charles V., he was afterwards with that emperor in the expedition against Algiers in 1541. Upon his return to his native country, he became a favourite with the protector Somerset; and for his gallant conduct at the battle of Musselburgh in 1547, the “ protector,” says Lloyd, “ honoured him with a knighthood, and his lady with a jewel,—the delicate and valiant man at once pleasing Mars and his Venus too.” He went ambassador with Sir William Pickering into France, 1553. Being a consistent Protestant, he remained unshaken during the turbulent period of Queen Mary, devoting his time in retirement to literature. It was at this period that he wrote his contribution to the *Mirror for Magistrates*, the *History of the Duke of Norfolk*. Immediately upon the accession of Elizabeth, he was again called into active life, and successively was ambassador to the Emperor Ferdinand, and to Philip king of Spain, from which last appointment, in consequence of his irksome situation, he obtained a recal in 1564, by addressing an elegy, written in imitation of Ovid, to Elizabeth. He probably did not afterwards meddle with public affairs, dying at his own residence which he had built in Clerkenwell Close, October 10, 1565.

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## HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY.

(1517-1546.)

Our communications and intercourse with Italy, which began to prevail about the beginning of the sixteenth century, not only introduced the study of classical literature into England, but gave a new turn to our vernacular poetry. At this period Petrarch still continued the most favourite poet of the Italians, and had established a manner which was universally adopted and imitated by his ingenious countrymen. In the meantime, the courts both of France and of England were distinguished for their elegance. Francis I. had changed the state of letters in France by mixing gallantry with learning, and by admitting the ladies to his court in company with ecclesiastics. His carousals were celebrated with a brilliancy and festivity unknown to the ceremonious shows of former princes. Henry VIII. vied with Francis in these gaieties. His ambition, which could not bear a rival even in diversions, was seconded by a liberality of disposition and a love of ostentation. For Henry, with many boisterous qualities, was magnificent and affable. Had he never murdered his wives, his politeness to the fair sex would have remained unimpeached. His martial sports were unencumbered by the barbaric pomp of the ancient chivalry, and softened by the growing habits of more rational manners. He was attached to those spectacles and public amusements in which beauty assumed a principal share; and his frequent masques and tournaments encouraged a high

spirit of romantic courtesy. Poetry was the natural accompaniment of these refinements. Henry himself was a leader and chief character in these pageantries, and at the same time a reader and a writer of verses. The language and manners of Italy were esteemed and studied. The sonnets of Petrarch were the great models of composition. They entered into the genius of the fashionable manners; and in a court of such a complexion, Petrarch of course became the popular poet. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, with a mistress perhaps as beautiful as Leonora, and at least with Petrarch's passion, if not his taste, led the way to great improvements in English poetry, by happy imitation of Petrarch and other Italian poets, who had been most successful in painting the anxieties of love with pathos and propriety.

Henry Howard was the son and grandson of two lords treasurers, dukes of Norfolk, and in his early childhood discovered the most promising marks of lively parts and an active mind. While a boy, he was habituated to the modes of a court, being, in 1526, cup-bearer to the king. In 1532 he married Frances Vere, daughter of John Earl of Oxford; and in the same year he attended the king to France, and was present at the interview between the English and French monarchs at Boulogne. Thence he appears to have accompanied the Duke of Richmond, the favourite natural son of Henry, to Paris, returning to attend the coronation of Anne Boleyn in June 1533. In the autumn of the same year he was appointed to attend the young duke at Windsor, pending the obtainment of the dispensation necessary to legalise the prince's marriage with the Lady Mary Howard, Surrey's only sister. In 1536, Surrey was knighted, and soon afterwards was called upon to be present at the trial of Anne Boleyn, as the representative of his father in his quality of earl marshal, the duke having to preside on the sad occasion in his other quality of lord treasurer. In 1540, Surrey distinguished himself in the jousts and tournaments celebrated in honour of the king's marriage with Anne of Cleves; and in the same year he accompanied the forces sent into France. In 1542, he was made a knight of the Garter; and in the same year accompanied the expedition, under the Duke of Norfolk, against Scotland. In April 1543 our poet was imprisoned in the Fleet for the offence—which Dr. Nott ludicrously considers as highly interesting and romantic—of “walking about the streets of the city at night in a lewd and unseemly manner, and breaking several windows with a stone-bow.” His frolicsome lordship, in his *Satire against the Citizens of London*, humorously says “that he had endeavoured to awaken them to a sense of their iniquities by flinging stones against their windows;” in which jocose explanation Dr.

Nott further discerns "an attempt, however wild and extravagant, at religious reformation." In the October following, Surrey joined the English army in alliance with the emperor, then encamped before Landrecy, near Boulogne, where, going to see the trenches soon after his arrival, he "escaped very hardly from a piece of ordnance that was shot towards him." He returned to England in November, and occupied himself for a while in constructing his seat called Mount Surrey, near Norwich, where the poet Churchyard was one of his pages. In the unhappy disputes between his parents, which commenced when he was about sixteen, it is painful to find his mother describe him as acting the part of "an ungracious son." The duke, however, strenuously repelled the charge which his wife made against him; and we may hope that "the gentle Surrey" himself merited not the heavy imputation conveyed by his mother's expression.

In 1554, upon the expedition to Boulogne, he was made marshal of the English army; and after taking that town, he was, in the beginning of September 1545, constituted the king's lieutenant and captain-general of all his army within the town and county of Boulogne. During his command there in 1546, hearing that a convoy of provisions of the enemy was on its way, he resolved to intercept it; but the Rhinegrave, with four thousand men of his own, and a considerable number of French, making an obstinate defence, the English were routed, Sir Edward Poynings, with many other gentlemen, killed, and the earl himself obliged to fly; though it appears, by a letter to the king, dated January 8th, 1548, that this advantage cost the enemy a great number of men. But the king was so highly displeased with this ill success, that he conceived a prejudice against the earl, and soon after removed him from his command. The earl being desirous, in the meantime, to regain his former favour with the king, skirmished with the French and routed them; but soon after writing over to the king's council that, as the enemy had cast much larger cannon than had been yet seen, with which they imagined they should soon demolish Boulogne, it deserved consideration whether the lower town should stand, as not being defensible, the council ordered him to return to England, in order to represent his sentiments more fully upon those points; and the Earl of Hertford was immediately sent over in his room. This exasperating the Earl of Surrey, occasioned him to let fall some expressions which savoured of revenge and dislike to the king, and a hatred of his councillors, and was probably one cause of his ruin, which soon after ensued. The Duke of Norfolk, who discerned the growing power of the Seymours, and the influence they were likely to have in the next reign, was for making an alliance with them. He therefore pressed his son, now a widower, to marry

the Earl of Hertford's daughter, and the Duchess of Richmond, his own daughter, now a widow, to marry Sir Thomas Seymour; but neither of these matches was effected, and the Seymours and Howards then became open enemies; and the Seymours failed not to inspire the king with an aversion to the Norfolks.

The real cause why the Earl of Surrey was finally committed (Dec. 12, 1547) to the Tower has never been accurately defined; but the charge upon which he was arraigned was, generally, high treason; and particularly, among other alleged offences, the adding some part of the royal arms to his own; but in this he was justified by the heralds, as he proved that a power of doing so was granted by preceding monarchs to his forefathers. Upon the strength of these suspicions and surmises, however, he and his father were committed to the Tower, the one by water and the other by land, so that they knew not of each other's apprehension. The 15th day of January next following he was arraigned at Guildhall, where he was found guilty, and received judgment. About nine days before the death of the king, he lost his head on Tower Hill, Jan. 21, 1548.

It is said, when a courtier asked King Henry why he was so zealous in taking off Surrey: "I observed him," says he, "an enterprising youth—his spirit was too great to brook subjection; and though I can manage him, yet no successor of mine will ever be able to do so; for which reason I have despatched him in my own time." He was first interred in the chapel of the Tower, and afterwards, in the reign of King James, his remains were removed to Framlingham in Suffolk.

Lord Surrey was the first of the English nobility who had any familiar intercourse with the Muses, and far surpassed his contemporaries in purity of language and harmony of numbers.

"This is he," expatiates Barry Cornwall, "who trod on the Field of the Cloth of Gold; who gazed on the magic glass of Cornelius Agrippa; who proclaimed the peerless beauty of his Florentine lady, and defended it in tilt and tournament. Vanity and love and heroism are written on his brow; and his life was an illustration of its aspect. He was a believer in princes and magicians; he was a nobleman, a courtier, a lover, a knight, a poet, an accomplished traveller, and an eminent soldier. He overcame the gallants of Tuscany, in honour of his Lady Geraldine; and he conquered the Scots at Flodden Field, in honour of his country. It was his misfortune to live in the reign of our Henry VIII., than whom a more fierce, uncertain, and relentless brute was never worshipped even among the abominations of Egypt. He was the first writer of narrative blank verse in the English language; though his poetry in general is in rhyme, and is more

like Petrarch's, perhaps, than any other model. He has some of the quaintness of his age upon him; but there is also a pure vein of pathos running through his poetry, and occasionally a depth of sentiment which is not perceptible in any of his contemporaries."

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### WILLIAM BALDWIN.

(Born circa 1518.)

William Baldwin is supposed by Wood to have been a west-country man. Having studied several years in logic and philosophy at Oxford, he proceeded M.A. in January 1532. The scanty materials of his life neither show his rank, pursuits, nor his connexions. In 1549 he subscribes himself "servaunt with Edwarde Whitchurche," the printer; but what was his immediate station and dependence upon the press is uncertain, although he appears to have found employment thereupon for several years. It is conjectured by Herbert, that he was "one of those scholars who followed printing in order to forward the Reformation," and therefore submitted to the labour of correcting the press. In 1563 he tells his readers "he has been called to another trade of type;" and he is believed to have then taken orders and commenced schoolmaster. With the exception of Sir Thomas Chaloner, he was the oldest man of the number who met by general assent to devise the continuation of Lydgate, in the form of the *Mirroure for Magistrates*, to which metrical series of histories he contributed fourteen out of the thirty-four lives, constituting part iii. One of the earliest of his writings, *A Treatise of Moral Philosophy*, was nearly as popular as the *Mirroure for Magistrates*, and went through many editions.

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### THOMAS LORD VAUX.

(Born circa 1520.)

Thomas Lord Vaux, "a poetical writer among the nobility in the reign of King Henry VIII., whose commendation," says Puttenham, "lyeth chiefly in the facility of his metre, and the aptness of his descriptions, such as he takes upon himself to make—namely, in sundry of his songs, wherein he sheweth the counterfeit action very

likely and pleasurable,"—was eldest son to Nicholas, the first lord. In 1532 he waited on the king in his expedition to Calais and Boulogne; a little before which time he is said to have had the custody of Queen Catherine. In the following year he was made a knight of the Bath, at the coronation of Anne Boleyn. He appears to have held no public office but that of captain of the Isle of Jersey, which he surrendered in 1536. He died early in the reign of Philip and Mary.

From the prose prologue to Sackville's *Induction to the Mirrour for Magistrates*, it would seem that Lord Vaux had undertaken to pen the history of King Edward's two sons, cruelly murdered in the Tower of London; but what he performed of this undertaking does not appear. Two poems in Tottle's collection, *The Assault of Cupid*, and that which begins, *I lothe that I did love* (from which three stanzas are quoted in the song of the gravediggers in *Hamlet*), are certainly his. Ten other pieces of his are preserved in the *Paradise of Dainty Devises*. William, the eldest son and successor of our author, seems also to have been a poet. Sir Egerton Brydges published two pieces of his in the *Poetical Register* of 1801.

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### NICHOLAS GRIMALDE.

(Born circa 1520.)

Nicholas Grimalde was a native of Huntingdonshire, and received the first part of his academical instruction at Christ's College, Cambridge. Removing to Oxford in 1542, he was elected fellow of Merton College; but about 1545, having opened a rhetorical lecture in the refectory of Christ Church, then newly founded, he was transplanted to that society, which gave the greatest encouragement to such students as were distinguished for their proficiency in criticism and philology. The same year he wrote a Latin tragedy, which probably was acted in the college, entitled *Archipropheta, sive Johannes Baptista, Tragedia*. He is the same person called by Strype "one Grimbould," who was chaplain to Bishop Ridley, and who was employed by that prelate, while in prison, to translate into English Laurentio Valla's book against the fiction of Constantine's *Donation*, with some other popular Latin pieces against the papists. In the ecclesiastical history of Mary's reign he appears to have been imprisoned for heresy, and to have saved his life, if not his credit, by a recantation. But theology does not seem to have been his talent, nor the glories of martyrdom



to have made any part of his ambition. One of his plans, which never took effect, was to print a new edition of Joseph of Exeter's poem on the Trojan war, with emendations from the most correct manuscripts. Grimalde merits all the more notice, as he is the second English poet, after Lord Surrey, who wrote in blank verse; nor is it his only praise that he was the first who followed in this new path of versification. To the style of blank verse exhibited by Surrey he added new strength, elegance, and modulation. In the disposition and conduct of his cadences he often approaches to the legitimate structure of the improved blank verse, though it is not to be supposed that he is entirely free from those dissonances and asperities which still adhered to the general character and state of our diction. Another of Grimalde's blank-verse poems, *On the Death of Zoroas*, has a most nervous and animated exordium.

As a writer of verses in rhyme, Grimalde yields to none of his contemporaries for a masterly choice of chaste expressions, and the concise elegances of didactic versification. Some of the couplets in his poem *In Praise of Moderation* have all the smartness which marks the modern style of sententious poetry, and would have done honour to Pope's ethic epistles.

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#### RICHARD EDWARDS.

(Circa 1523-1566.)

Richard Edwards was born in Somersetshire, about 1523. He is said by Wood to have been a scholar of Corpus Christi College, in Oxford; but in his early years he was employed in some department about the court. This circumstance appears from one of his poems in the *Paradise of Dainty Devises*, a miscellany which contains many of his pieces.

He was at one time a senior student of Christ Church, in Oxford, then newly founded. In the British Museum there is a small set of manuscript poems signed with his initials, addressed to some of the beauties of Queen Mary and of Queen Elizabeth. Hence we may conjecture he did not remain long at the University. Having first been a member of Lincoln's Inn, he was, in the year 1561, constituted a gentleman of the Royal Chapel by Queen Elizabeth, and master of the singing-boys there: he had received his musical education while at Oxford, under George Etheridge. The earliest actual notice we have of Edwards as a dramatic poet, in which character he enjoyed a high reputation in his time, is under the year 1565, when a play of his production, *Damon and Pythias*, was performed by the children

of the chapel, under his direction, before the queen at Richmond. The other extant play of his, *Palamon and Arcite*, was produced, also under his superintendence, before the queen, in Christ Church Hall, Oxford, in 1566, only a few months before his death. It is clear that we have lost many of his productions; for Thomas Twine, in his epitaph upon Edwards—whom he designates

“ The flower of our realme,  
And phœnix of our age—”

after specifying *Damon and Pythias* and *Palamon and Arcite*, refers to more plays of his

“ Full fit for princes’ ears.”

Puttenham, in like manner, gives the prize to Edwards for comedy and interlude, the term interlude being here of wide extent; for Edwards, besides that he was a writer of regular dramas, appears to have been a contriver of masques and a composer of poetry for pageantry. In a word, says Warton, he united all those arts and accomplishments which minister to popular pleasantry. He was the first fiddle, the most fashionable sonneteer, the readiest rhymers, and the most facetious mimic of the court; and his popularity seems to have arisen from those pleasing talents of which no specimens could be transmitted to posterity, but which eminently influenced his partial contemporaries in his favour.

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#### WILLIAM ROY.

(Circa 1526.)

William Roy, a poetical satirist, less distinguished than Skelton as a Latin scholar, but at least equally formidable to Cardinal Wolsey and the Catholics, flourished in 1526. His work, which is now extremely rare, forms a small duodecimo volume, elegantly printed in black-letter, without date or publisher’s name. It has a prose dedication to some person of whose name the initials only are given; and a metrical prologue, consisting of a dialogue between the author and his book. Then follows a sort of satirical dirge, or lamentation on the death of the Mass; and then the treatise itself, which is called a “Briefe Dialogue between two Preestes’ Servauntes named Walkin and Jeffray.” It is in two parts, of which the first is, in general, a satire on the monastic orders, though even here the cardinal and his friends are occasionally introduced. Roy’s versification is tolerably

nervous and flowing; and his language, though coarse, is nervous and impressive, and his invective very bitter.

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## JOHN STILL.

(Born circa 1526.)

John Still, vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells, is the author of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, a production which, until the recent discovery of Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister*, was considered the earliest regular comedy in our language. It was first acted at Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1566; and possesses humour enough to carry the reader, without impatience, through the slow development of its homœopathic plot, which is built on the circumstance of an old woman having lost her needle, which throws the whole village into confusion, till it is at last providentially found in an unlucky part of Hodge's dress. This must evidently have happened at a time when the manufactures of Sheffield and Birmingham had not reached the height of perfection they have since achieved.

Suppose that there is one sewing-needle in a parish; that the owner, a notable diligent old dame, loses it; that a mischief-making wag sets it about that another old woman has stolen this valuable instrument of household industry; that strict search is made every where in-doors for it in vain; and that then the incensed parties sally forth to scold it out in the open air, till words end in blows, and the affair is referred over to the higher authorities,—and we shall have an exact idea, though perhaps not so lively a one, of what passes in this authentic document between Gammer Gurton and her gossip Dame Chat; Diccon the Bedlam (the causer of these harms); Hodge, Gammer Gurton's servant; Tyb, her maid; Cœcke, her prentice-boy; Doll; Scapethrift; Master Baillie, his master; Dr. Rat, the curate; and Gib, the cat, who may be fairly reckoned one of the *dramatis personæ*, and performs no mean part. The wit is of the homely kind, but hearty; and there is much information to be amusingly gathered out of the book as to the manners of our ancestors at the time.

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## GEORGE GASCOIGNE.

(Circa 1530-1578.)

George Gascoigne, a member of an ancient and noble family, was born in Westmoreland, about the year 1530. Having received the rudiments of his education under a clergyman named Nevinson, he removed to Cambridge, whence he proceeded to London, and entered himself of Gray's Inn, for the purpose of studying the law. His connexions, however, soon drew him to court, where he lived with a splendour and expense to which his means were inadequate; and at length, being obliged to sell his patrimony to pay his debts, he left the court, and embarked, 19th March, 1572, at Gravesend, for Holland. The vessel was under the direction of a drunken Dutch pilot, who, from intoxication, ran them aground, and they were in imminent danger of perishing. Twenty of the crew, who had taken to the long-boat, were swallowed up by the surge; but Gascoigne and his friends, Rowland, Yorke, and Herle, resolutely remained at the pumps, and the wind shifting, they were again driven to sea. At length—

“Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum,”

they landed in Holland, where Gascoigne obtained a captain's commission under the gallant William Prince of Orange, who was then emancipating the Netherlands from the Spanish yoke. In this service he acquired considerable military reputation, but an unfortunate quarrel with his colonel retarded his career. Conscious of his deserts, he repaired immediately to Delft, resolved to resign his commission into the hands from which he received it; the prince in vain endeavouring to close the breach between his officers.

While this negotiation was mediating, a circumstance occurred which had nearly cost our poet his life. A Scottish lady at the Hague (then in the possession of the enemy), with whom Gascoigne had been on intimate terms, had his portrait in her hands (“his counterfayt,” as he calls it); and resolving to part with it to himself alone, wrote a letter to him on the subject, which fell into the hands of his enemies in the camp. From this paper they meant to have raised a report unfavourable to his loyalty; but upon its reaching his hands, Gascoigne, conscious of his fidelity, laid it immediately before the prince, who saw through their design, and gave him passports for visiting the lady at the Hague: the burghers, however, watched his motions with malicious caution, and he was called in derision “the Green Knight.” Although disgusted with the ingratitude of those on whose side he fought, Gascoigne still retained his

commission, till the prince, coming personally to the siege of Middleburgh, gave him an opportunity of displaying his zeal and courage, when the prince rewarded him with 300 guelders beyond his regular pay, and a promise of future promotion. He was, however, surprised by 3000 Spaniards, when commanding, under Captain Sheffield, 500 Englishmen lately landed; but he retired in good order at night, under the walls of Leyden. The jealousy of the Dutch was now openly displayed by their refusing to open their gates; and our military band and his band were, in consequence, made captives. At the expiration of twelve days his men were released; and the officers, after an imprisonment of four months, were sent back to England. Gascoigne then betook himself once more to Gray's Inn, and thence, in 1575, to "his poore house at Walthamstowe," where he collected and published his poems; having previously printed the *Complaynt of Phylomene* (begun as early as 1562), and written a satire called the *Steele Glasse*. In the summer of this year he accompanied Queen Elizabeth in her progress, and supplied part of the entertainment at Kenilworth Castle and at Woodstock. He is supposed to have died in 1578, at Walthamstow. Gascoigne's works are thus enumerated in the title-page to the collective edition of them printed in 1587: "The Pleasauntest Workes of George Gascoigne, Esquyre; newlye compyled into one volume; that is to say: his Flowers, Hearbes, Weedes; the Fruites of Warre; the Comedy called Supposes; the Tragedy of Jocasta; the Steele Glasse; the Complaynt of Phylomene; the Story of Ferdinando Jeronimi; and the Pleasure at Kenilworth Castle." To the edition of his *Steele Glasse* printed in 1576 is prefixed the author's portrait, in armour, with a ruff and a large beard. On his right hang a musket and bandoliers; on his left stands an ink-horn and some books; and underneath is the by-no-means diffident motto, *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*.

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#### ALEXANDER SCOT.

(Circa 1530.)

Alexander Scot, a contemporary and friend of Alexander Montgomery, appears to have lived at Dalkeith, to have been a layman (one of his odes is addressed to his wife), and a friend to the Reformation. His poems, a large number of which are printed in the collections of Lord Hailes, Allan Ramsay, and Mr. Sibbald, may be classed among the most elegant metrical effusions of the sixteenth century. They are generally founded on subjects of an amatory kind, and dis-

cover a considerable degree of fancy and harmony. His lyric measures are chosen with sufficient skill ; and his language, when compared with that of contemporary poets, will be found to possess an uncommon share of terseness and precision. The longest of his productions is *Ane Newe-Yere Gift to the Quene, when she came first home* ; which is less valuable for its poetry than for the light it reflects on an important era of Scottish history. His *Justing between William Adamson and John Syme* is an imitation of *Christe's Kirk on the Green* ; and although inferior to the admirable original, is distinguished by many happy strokes of humorous description. Several of the Scottish poets have exercised their satirical powers on subjects of this kind. Scot's *Justing* is undoubtedly superior to the similar attempts of Dunbar and Lindsay.

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 GEORGE TURBERVILLE.

(Circa 1530.)

This poet, descended from a family of considerable note in Dorsetshire, was a younger son of Nicholas Turberville of Whitchurch,



WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

and was born about the year 1530. He received his education at Winchester, and became fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1561 ; but

left the University without taking a degree, and resided for some time in one of the inns of court. He appears to have accumulated a stock of classical learning, and to have been well acquainted with modern languages. He formed his ideas of poetry partly on the classics, and partly on the study of the Italian school. His poetical pursuits, however, did not interfere with more important business; and his abilities recommended him to the post of secretary to Thomas Randolph, who was appointed Queen Elizabeth's ambassador to the court of Russia.

While in this situation he wrote three poetical epistles to as many friends,—Edward Davies, Edmund Spenser (not the poet), and Parker, —describing the manners of the Russians. After his return he was much courted as a man of accomplished education and manners; and the first edition of his *Songs and Sonnets*, published in 1567, seems to have added considerably to his fame.

His other works were translations of the *Heroical Epistles of Ovid*, and of the *Eclogues of B. Mantuan*. Another very rare production, although twice printed, is entitled *Tragical Tales translated by Turberville, in time of his troubles, out of sundrie Italians, with the argument and l'envoye to each tale*. What his troubles were, we are not told. To the latter edition of these tales were annexed, *Epitaphs and Sonnets, with some other broken pamphlettes and epistles, sent to certain of his friends in England, at his being in Moscovia*.

Our author was living in 1594, and in great esteem; but we have no account of his death. His *Essays, politic and moral*, were published in 1608, together with the *Booke of Falconrye and Hawking*.

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### THOMAS SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST,

EARL OF DOBSET.

(Circa 1530-1607.)

Thomas, son and heir to Mr. Richard Sackville, chancellor and sub-treasurer of the Exchequer, &c., was born about 1530, at Buckhurst, in the parish of Witham, Sussex, the seat of that ancient family. He was from childhood distinguished for wit and manly behaviour. From domestic tuition he was removed to Hart Hall (now Hertford College), Oxford; spending some time also at Cambridge, where he became a master of arts. At both universities he was celebrated as a Latin and English poet; and he carried

his love of poetry, which he seems to have almost solely cultivated, to the Inner Temple. Here he composed, with the assistance of Thomas Norton, and for the honour and entertainment of his fellow-students, the play of *Gorboduc*, the first ascertained specimen in our language of a heroic tale written in blank verse, divided into acts and scenes, and clothed in all the formalities of a regular tragedy. It was first exhibited in the great hall of the Inner Temple, by the students of that society, as part of the grand entertainment of a grand Christmas, on the 18th of January, 1561. It was never intended for the press; but being surreptitiously and very carelessly printed in 1565, an exact edition, with the consent and under the inspection of the authors, appeared in 1571, under the title of "The Tragedie of Ferrex and Porrex:" whereas the edition of 1565 was entitled "The Tragedie of Gorboduc; whereof three actes were wrytten by Thomas Nortone, and the two laste by Thomas Sackvyle." "The tragedy," writes Hazlitt, "as the first in our language, is certainly a curiosity, and in other respects it is also remarkable; though, perhaps, enough has been said about it. As a work of genius, it may be set down as nothing, for it contains hardly a memorable line or passage; as a work of art, and the first of its kind attempted in the language, it may be considered as a monument of the taste and skill of the authors. Its merit is confined to the regularity of the plot and metre—to its general good sense, and strict attention to common decorum. If the poet has not stamped the peculiar genius of his age upon this first attempt, it is not an inconsiderable proof of strength of mind and conception, sustained by its own sense of propriety alone, to have so far anticipated the taste of succeeding times as to have avoided any glaring offence against rules and modes which had no existence in his day: or perhaps a truer solution might be, that there were as yet no examples of a more ambiguous and irregular kind to tempt him to err; and as he had not the impulse or resources within himself to strike out a new path, he merely attended with modesty and caution to the classical models with which, as a scholar, he was well acquainted. The language of the dialogue is clear, unaffected, and intelligible, without the smallest difficulty even to this day. It has 'no figures nor no fantasies' to which the most fastidious critic can object; but the dramatic power is nearly none at all. It is written expressly to set forth the dangers and mischiefs that arise from the division of sovereign power; and the several speakers dilate upon the different views of the subject in turn, like clever schoolboys set to compose a thesis, or declaim upon the fatal consequences of ambition, and the uncertainty of human affairs. The author, in the end, declares for the doctrine of passive



obedience and non-resistance; a doctrine which, indeed, was seldom questioned at that time of day."

In the year 1559 had appeared the first edition of *The Mirrour for Magistrates*; "wherein may be seen, by example of others, with how grevous plagues Vices are punished, and how frayle and unstable worldlie Prosperitie is founde, even of those whom Fortune seemeth most highlie to favoure." The connexion of our author with this work commenced only with the second edition, in 1563, to which he contributed that beautifully descriptive and highly-polished poem called *The Induction*, which served to envelop all the other contributors in the shade of secondary characters. It is a poem which sometimes reminds one of Chaucer, and at others seems like an anticipation, in some degree, both of the measure and manner of Spenser.

The high birth and ample patrimony of our author soon advanced him to important situations and employments. His eminent accomplishments and abilities having acquired the confidence and esteem of Queen Elizabeth, the poet was soon lost in the statesman, and negotiations and embassies extinguished for a time the milder ambitions of the muse. In the fourth and fifth year of Queen Mary, his name is found on the parliamentary lists, and again in the fifth of Elizabeth. Not long after, he went abroad to travel, and was detained some time prisoner at Rome, but was liberated, and returned to take possession of a patrimonial inheritance which devolved to him in 1566. He was knighted by the Duke of Norfolk, in the queen's absence, in 1567, and at the same time promoted to the dignity of the peerage, by the title of Baron Buckhurst. In 1573 his royal mistress sent him ambassador to Charles IX. of France, where he was treated with all due distinction. In 1574 he sat as one of the peers on the trial of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, at which time he was also in the Privy Council. He was nominated one of the commissioners for the trial of Mary Queen of Scots; and although it does not appear he was present at her condemnation at Fotheringay Castle, yet, after the confirmation of her sentence, he was the person made choice of, on account of his address and tenderness of disposition, to bear the unhappy tidings to her, and to see the sentence carried into execution. He was next employed on an embassy to the States-General, to accommodate a difference in regard to some remonstrances made against the conduct of Lord Leicester. This commission he executed with fidelity and honour; but he incurred the displeasure of Lord Burleigh, whose influence with the queen occasioned him not only to be recalled, but to be confined to his house for nine months. On the death of Lord Leicester, in 1588, his interest at court was renewed. He was made a knight of the Garter; was joined with Lord Burleigh

in negotiating a peace with Spain; and upon the death of Burleigh (1598), succeeded him in his office, by virtue of which he became in a manner prime minister, and as such exerted himself vigorously for the public good and her majesty's safety. In 1591 he was, by her majesty's special interposition, elected chancellor of the University of Oxford, in opposition to Lord Essex.

In 1598 he was one of those whom his majesty consulted and confided in upon all occasions; and he lived in the highest esteem and reputation, without any extraordinary decay of health, till his death in 1607.

### THOMAS NEWTON.

(Born circa 1560.)

Thomas Newton, born of a respectable family in Cheshire, was sent, when about thirteen years of age, to Trinity College, Oxford. He went, soon afterwards, to Queen's College, Cambridge; but returned in a few years to Oxford, where he was re-admitted to his former college. He became famous for the pure elegance of his Latin poetry, of which he has left a specimen in his *Illustria aliquot Anglorum Encomia* (1589). For some time he practised physic, and in the character of that profession wrote and translated many tracts. He seems to have been a partisan of the Puritans from his pamphlet of *Christian Friendship, with an invective against Dice-play and other profane games* (1586). Relinquishing the medical profession, he taught school, first at Macclesfield, and then at Little Ilford in Essex, where he was beneficed, and where he probably died, having amassed a considerable fortune by his various occupations and productions. Newton edited the first collective translation of Seneca's tragedies, himself contributing the *Thebais*. He also wrote a poem on the death of Queen Elizabeth, called *Atropoion Delion, or the Death of Delia* (1603); and a flowery romance, *A pleasant new historie, or a fragrant poete made of three floures, Rosa, Rosalynd, and Rosemary*.

### HENRY ADAMSON.

(Circa 1580, died 1639.)

Henry Adamson, son of the provost of Perth, and nephew of Archbishop Adamson, was born at Perth, and educated for the church, which, however, he is believed not to have entered. He is

known as the author of a singular poem, entitled *The Muses' Threnodie, or Mirthful Mournings for the Death of Mr. Gall* (1638); which, however, is much less an elegy than a discursive description of the history and antiquities of Perth and its neighbourhood. The poem, it seems, was recommended for publication by Drummond of Hawthornden, who compared it, on account of its strange framework, to the *Sileni* of Alcibiades,—“monstrous heads without, but full of rare artifice within.” The chief poem is preceded by a shorter, called



PERTH.

*An Inventory of the Gabions*; ‘gabions’ meaning, with the author, antiquarian nic-nacs, which, in the *Threnodie*, join in the lament for Mr. Gall. The *Inventory* is remarkable for the close resemblance of its measure and rhymes to those of *Hudibras*, which was written long afterwards. Mr. Adamson died in 1639.

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## ULPIAN FULWELL.

(Born circa 1530.)

Ulpian Fulwell, born in Somersetshire, became a commoner of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford. We know nothing further of his personal history. He was the author of a poetical interlude entitled *Like will to Like, quoth the Devil to the Collier*, published in 1568, which, says Collier, "contains some attempts at character, though the foundation of the piece is entirely allegorical: it is by no means regularly conducted; and a good deal has been sacrificed to produce laughter among the audience."\* He wrote also a volume of mingled prose and verse, entitled *The Flower of Fame; containing the bright renown and most fortunate reigne of Henry VIII.* (1575).

## EDWARD VERE, EARL OF OXFORD.

(1534-1604.)

Edward Vere, Lord Oxford, was the seventeenth earl of that ancient family, and by no means the least illustrious. His youth was distinguished by his wit, by adroitness in his exercises, by valour and zeal for his country. Having travelled into Italy, he is recorded by Stowe to have been the first that brought into England embroidered gloves and perfumes; and presenting the queen with a pair of the former, she was so pleased with them as to be drawn with them in one of her portraits. The Earl of Oxford shone in the tournaments of that reign, in two of which he was honoured with a prize from her majesty's own hand, being led armed by two ladies into her presence-chamber.

In the year 1585 he was at the head of the nobility that embarked with the Earl of Leicester for the relief of the States of Holland; and in 1588 joined the fleet, with ships hired at his own expense, to repel the Spanish Armada.

He was knight of the Garter, and sat on the trials of the Queen of Scots, of the Earls of Arundel, of Essex, and Southampton; but another remarkable trial in that reign proved very disastrous to our peer himself. He was an intimate friend of the Duke of Norfolk,

\* Annals of the Stage, ii.

who was condemned on account of the Scottish queen. Lord Oxford earnestly solicited his father-in-law, the treasurer Burleigh, to save the duke's life; and not succeeding, he was so incensed against the minister, that, in most absurd and unjust revenge, he swore he would do all he could to ruin his daughter; and accordingly not only forsook her bed, but wasted and sold a full third of the vast inheritance that descended to him from his ancestors.

Lord Burleigh's own diary assigns a baser cause for Lord Oxford's separation from his wife: "1576, March 29, the Erle of Oxford arryved: being returned out of Italy, he was entyced by certen lewd persons to be a stranger to his wiff." Whatever the occasion of separation, a reconciliation afterwards took place, as Lady Oxford bore her husband a daughter in 1584, another in 1587, and a son. His lordship died, at an advanced age, in 1604, and was buried at Hackney. He was an admired poet, and reckoned the best writer of comedy in his time. The very names of his plays, however, are lost; but a few of his poems are extant in the *Paradise of Dainty Devises*.

A votary of the Muses, and a lord-chamberlain of England, was sure to be looked up to as the Phœbus of poetry and the Mæcenas of every verse-maker. Numerous productions were consequently inscribed to the Earl of Oxford, and high eulogiums passed on his qualifications as a writer. Watson, Lely, Golding, Munday, and Greene, appear among the number of his dedicatory panegyrists; and Spenser and Locke, the best and the worst poets of that period, have each transmitted a complimentary sonnet to his praise. John Farmer, a composer of madrigals, applauds his lordship's judgment in music also; and protests, "without flatterie," that "using this science as a recreation, he has overgone most of those who make it a profession."

Webbe, in an early discourse on English metre, declares that the Earl of Oxford may challenge to himself the title of the *most excellent* among the rare devisers of poetry in Queen Elizabeth's court. The same "noble gentleman" is placed first "in the crew of courtly makers" by Puttenham, and is ranked by Meres among the best for comedy. Mr. Ellis observes, with his usual propriety and judgment, that "Lord Oxford's poetical talents were much admired, or at least extolled, by his contemporaries; and such of his sonnets as are preserved in the *Paradise of Dainty Devises* are certainly not among the worst, although they are by no means the best in the collection. One only, the *Judgment of Desire*, can be said to rise a little above mediocrity."

## ALEXANDER ARBUTHNOT.

(1538-1583.)

Alexander Arbuthnot, the younger son of the laird of Arbuthnot, in Kincardineshire, was born in 1538 ; and after pursuing the study of the law at Paris, under Cujat, returned to Scotland, and directing his attention to theology, was presented to the living of Arbuthnot and Logie-Buchan, and in July 1568 sat as one of the General



ABERDEEN CATHEDRAL.

Assembly at Edinburgh. In 1569 he was appointed principal of King's College, Aberdeen ; " and," says Spottiswood, " by his diligent teaching and dexterous government, he not only revived the study of good letters, but gained many from the superstitions whereunto they were given." He is considered by Mackenzie, Sibbald, and other writers, to be identical with the Alexander Arbuthnot who, being king's printer, incurred the royal displeasure by printing Buchanan's *History of Scotland*. Certain it is, that in 1583 he received a presentation to one of the churches of St. Andrew's, which the king would not permit him to enter upon. He was soon, however,

placed beyond the reach of mortal restraint, dying at Aberdeen, 10th October, 1583, before he had completed the age of forty-five. His remains were interred, on the 20th of the same month, in the college church.

His contemporary, James Melvil, represents him "as a man of singular gifts of learning, wisdom, godliness, and sweetness of nature;" and his character has been thus delineated by the impartial hand of Spottiswood: "He was greatly beloved of all men, hated of none; and in such account for his moderation with the chief men of these parts, that without his advice they could almost do nothing; which put him in a great fashrie, whereof he did oft complain. Pleasant and jocund in conversation, and in all sciences expert; a good poet, mathematician, philosopher, theologue, lawyer, and in medicine skilful; so as in every subject he could promptly discourse, and to good purpose." From the specimens of his metrical powers that have been preserved, *The Miseries of a puir Scholar*, *The Praises of Wemen*, and another effusion, Arbuthnot may be pronounced an ingenious and pleasing poet. The Maitland Mss. at Edinburgh and Cambridge contain several unpublished poems by this writer.

### THOMAS CAMPION.

(Circa 1540-1623.)

Thomas Campion, who by Camden, in his *Remains*, is classed with Spenser, Daniel, Jonson, Drayton, and Shakspeare, was a physician in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., who recreated himself with poetry. Educated at Cambridge, he thence removed to Gray's Inn, of which society he was admitted a member in 1586, presumably with a view to the law, which, however, as has been intimated, he relinquished for medicine. "Sweet Master Campion," as he is styled by his contemporaries, was a scientific musician as well as a poet, and wrote as such *A New Waye of making four parts in Counterpoint*, and *Songs bewailing the untimely Death of Prince Henry, set forth to be sung to the lute or viol by John Coprario* (i. e. John Cooper). These meritorious compositions, seven in number, are inscribed in a copy of Latin verses to Frederic Count Palatine, the brother-in-law of Prince Henry. Campion also wrote *The Description of a Maske presented before the king at Whitehall, in honour of the marriage of Lord Hayes with the daughter of Lord Denny* (1607); *Thomas Campiani Epigrammatum libri ii.; Umbra Elegiarum, liber unus*

(1619), &c. &c. To Davidson's *Poetical Rhapsody* he contributed four pieces. He died in January 1623.

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## HENRY CHETTLÉ.

(Circa 1540-1604.)

Henry Chettle, at the time of Queen Elizabeth's death, 1603, had been, according to his own statement, "young almost thirty years ago," so that we may assume him to have been born somewhere about 1540. Where he was born does not appear. A family of the name is mentioned by Hutchins, in his *History of Dorsetshire*, as seated at Blandford St. Mary from 1547 to about 1690, and he sets forth the burial of one Henry Chettle in the churchyard there in the year 1616; but whether the family was that of the poet cannot now be determined. The Henry Chettle so buried in 1616 cannot have been the poet himself, for he died before 1607. He appears to have been in early life a compositor; and for a short time, about 1591, a master-printer, in partnership with William Hoskins and John Danter. The period of his commencing author has been variously estimated. Ritson assigns to him a poetical tract published in 1578; but, as Mr. Rimbault, the editor of his *Kind Hart's Dreame*, points out, Chettle's name does not appear either in Webbe's *Discourse of Poetry and Poets*, published in 1586, or in Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, published in 1589. He may be supposed to have written for the stage some time before 1598, for in that year Meres mentions him among his literary worthies as "one of the best for comedy." Malone identifies the year 1597 as that in which he began to write plays, stating, from Henslowe's diary, that between 1597 and 1603 Chettle was concerned in the production of forty plays, only four of which have come down to us. His other writings consist of *Piers Plainnes Seaven Years' Prenteship*, a prose tract, published 1595; *England's Mourning Garment*, notices of contemporary poets, published in 1603, and reprinted in the *Harleian Miscellany*; and *Kind Hart's Dreame, containing five Apparitions, with their Invectives against Abuses, &c.*, published in 1592, and reprinted by the Percy Society. The last tract contains incidental notices of Greene, Marlowe, Tarleton, and Shakspeare. Chettle was also the editor of Greene's *Groat's-worth of Wit*. As to Chettle's person, he is described by Dekker, in his account of the assemblage of poets in Elysium, as "coming in sweating and blowing, by reason of his fatness."



The following is a list of the plays in which Chettle was more or less engaged :

- 1, 2. The Downfal and Death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon. (With A. Munday.) 1597-8.
3. The Valiant Welchman. (With Drayton.) Feb. 1598.
- 4, 5. Earl Goodwin and his three Sons. (With Drayton, Dekker, and R. Wilson.) March 1598. Not printed.
6. Piers of Exton. (With the same.) March 1598. Not printed.
7. Black Batman of the North. Part I. April 1598. Not printed.
8. Black Batman of the North. Part II. (With R. Wilson.) April 1598. Not printed.
9. The Play of a Woman. July 1598. Not printed.
10. The Conquest of Brute, with the first finding of the Bath. (With J. Day and John Singer.) July 1598. Not printed.
11. Hot Anger soon cold. (With Henry Porter and Ben Jonson.) August 1598. Not printed.
12. Catiline's Conspiracy. (With R. Wilson.) Aug. 1598. Not printed.
13. 'Tis no Deceit to deceive the Deceiver. Sept. 1598. Not printed.
14. Æneas' Revenge, with the Tragedy of Polyphemus. Feb. 1599. Not printed.
15. Agamemnon. (With Dekker.) June 1599. Not printed. Malone identifies this play with the Troilus and Cressida assigned by Henslowe to the same authors.
16. The Stepmother's Tragedy. Aug. 1599. Not printed.
17. Patient Grissel. (With Dekker and Wm. Houghton.) Dec. 1599. Printed 1603.
18. The Arcadian Virgin. (With W. Haughton.) Dec. 1599. Not printed.
19. Damon and Pythias. Jan. 1600. Not printed.
20. The Seven Wise Masters. (With Dekker, Haughton, and Day.) March 1600. Not printed.
21. The Golden Ass, and Cupid and Psyche. (With Dekker and Day.) April 1600. Not printed.
22. The Wooing of Death. April 1600. Not printed.
23. The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green. (With J. Day.) April 1600. Printed 1659.
24. All is not Gold that glitters. (With S. Rowley.) March 1601. Not printed.
25. Sebastian, King of Portugal. (With Dekker.) April 1601. Not printed.
- 26, 27. Cardinal Wolsey, in two parts. August 1601, May 1602. Not printed.
28. The Orphan's Tragedy. Sept. 1601. Not printed.
29. Too Good to be True. (With R. Hathwaye and Wentworth Smith.) Nov. 1601. Not printed.
30. Love parts Friendship. (With Wentworth Smith.) May 1602. Not printed.
31. Tobyas. May 1602. Not printed.

- 32. *Jephtha*. May 1602. Not printed.
- 33. *A Danish Tragedy*. May 1602. Not printed.
- 34. *Femelanco*. (With Robinson.) Sept. 1602. Not printed.
- 35, 36. *Lady Jane*, in two parts. (With Dekker, T. Heywood, Wentworth Smith, and Webster.) Nov. 1602. Not printed.
- 37, 38. *The London Florentine*, in two parts. (With T. Heywood.) Dec. 1602.
- 39. *The Tragedy of Hoffman*. Dec. 1602. Printed 1631.
- 40. *Jane Shore*. (With J. Day.) March 1603. Not printed.

Henslowe mentions, under date Sept. 3d, 1598, "40s. advanced to Chettle, Jonson, Dekker, and other gentlemen," on account of a tragedy they were then engaged upon, called *Robert the Second, King of Scots*.

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### ALEXANDER MONTGOMERY.

(Born circa 1540.)

Alexander Montgomery, whose poetical talents procured for him the patronage and favour of James VI. of Scotland, was born of Scottish parents in Germany, and appears, from the title-page of his works, to have been a military captain. According to Dempster, he was commonly known by the title of *Eques Montanus*, the Highland Knight; but there is no evidence of his being legally entitled to such an appellation. Polwart mentions him as having resided in Argyle; and the author of a *Facetious Poem, in imitation of the Cherry and Slae*, seems to represent him as an inhabitant of the district of Badenyon. John Wilson, the author of *Clyde*, a descriptive poem, says that Montgomery resided also occasionally at Finlayston in Renfrewshire, and that he wrote a poem in honour of that locality. Of the royal bounty which his talents had procured him, he seems to have sustained at least a temporary deprivation; his poems insinuate that a pension which he had enjoyed was withheld at the secret instigation of his enemies. He also complains of his being involved in a tedious process before the court of session, and harassed with misfortunes of every kind. One of his poems is entitled *The Poet's Complainte against the Unkindness of his Companions when he was in Prison*. Many of the poems of Montgomery are written in the querulous strain, but he always speaks like a man conscious of rectitude; and the recollection of his own virtues, together with the license of his poetical talents, seems to have been his principal source

of consolation under the manifold calamities to which he appears to have been exposed. He died somewhere between 1597 and 1615. Of his works (the most satisfactory edition of which is that published by Dr. Irving in 1821), the best known is *The Cherrie and the Slae*, an allegorical poem, the meaning of which has been variously explained, but which, upon the whole, would appear to have had a religious aim: the poet perceives the cherry growing upon a tall tree, and that tree rising from a formidable precipice; but the sloe, a fruit of an inferior species, is seen depending from a less dangerous height, and seems to invite the irresolute hand. Lord Hailes represents Montgomery as a man of genius; and Thomas Dempster pronounces him the Scottish Pindar, and inferior to none of the ancients in elegance of taste or beauty of composition. Montgomery wrote a *Flyting betwene Montgomerie and Polwart* (Sir Patrick Hume, of Polwarth), but this scolding ditty does not redound much to his credit. We read with much more satisfaction the author's religious strains. Besides composing various poems of a pious tendency, he versified several of the Psalms in a peculiar measure, which was perhaps adapted to the church music. Montgomery is almost the only Scottish poet who has composed any considerable number of sonnets in his native language. Irvine quotes, from the Drummond manuscripts, no fewer than seventy poems of Montgomery of this character.

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### BARNABY GOOGE.

(Circa 1540.)

Barnaby Googe, born at Alvingham, in Lincolnshire, was educated both at Christ's College, Cambridge, and at New College, Oxford. He was first a retainer to Cecil, and then, in 1563, a gentleman pensioner to the queen. He is chiefly known as the translator of *The Zodiak of Life*, written by the godly and learned poet *Marcellus Palingenius Stellatus*. His version appeared at intervals between 1560 and 1565, in which latter year it was published in a complete form. In 1563 he produced a volume of miscellaneous poems of his own composition, entitled *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonnetes*; and in 1566 a translation of Naogeorgius' (Kirchmaier) hexametrical poem.

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DUBTHACH MAC LUGHAIR.



## HUMPHREY GIFFORD.

(Born circa 1550.)

We know nothing further of Humphrey Gifford, than that he was the author of *A Poetrie of Gilliflowers, eche differing from other in colour and odour, yet all swete* (London, 1580). It is a volume, now very scarce, of prose translation from the Italian and French, and of poems, devotional, moral, and narrative. The author wrote with great ease.

## GEORGE WHETSTONE.

(Born circa 1550.)

George Whetstone, a poet, dramatist, and miscellaneous writer of the Elizabethan period, is commended by Webbe, in his *Discourse of English Poetrie*, as "a man singularly well skyld in this faculty of poetrie, and worthy to weare the laurell wreathe;" and by Meres, in his *Wit's Treasury*, is placed between Shakspeare and Gascoigne, as one of "the most passionate poets" of that age "to bewail and bemoan the perplexities of love." From his own works it is supposed that he first tried his fortune at court, encouraged perhaps by family respectability, as we find him claiming kin with William Fleetwoode, Esq., Recorder of London, to whom he addresses his *Promos and Cassandra*. But beguiled by the double-faced, double-tongued deceivers of the court, he found his patrimony consumed, whilst dangling after them in fruitless expectation of preferment. Being now destitute of support, he entered the army, and was engaged in some foreign service as a commissioned officer, but of what rank does not appear. Such, however, was his gallant conduct, that it was rewarded with additional pay; but he returned home with more reputation than profit; and his prospects of advancement were so limited, as to determine him to convert his sword into a ploughshare. Yet herein likewise proving unsuccessful, he was compelled to resort to the generosity of his friends. "This proved," he tells us, "only a broken reed, and worse than common beggary of charity from strangers. Now craft (he says) arrested him in his sleep, and tempted him with the proposals of several professions; but for the knavery or slavery of them, he rejected all: his munificence constrained him to love money, and his magnanimity to hate all the ways of getting it." Elsewhere he tells us, that "when he was an officer, he gave all the spoils to the soldiers under his command." At last "he resolved to accompanye the adventurous Captaine Syr Humfrey

Gylbert in his honorable voiage," undertaken for restoring and improving our possessions in Newfoundland. The ships were preparing for this expedition late in the summer of 1578, and probably sailed in the early part of the following year. When the shipping was prepared, however, unanimity was wanting: some hesitated at subjection, others proved unequal to their engagements, and the majority dispersed, leaving Sir Humphrey to prosecute his adventure with only a few of his most faithful adherents, among whom we may, perhaps, include Whetstone. With these few he ventured to sea; and, after a smart action with the Spaniards, was compelled to return home, with the loss of a large ship.

From this period Whetstone is thought to have depended upon his pen for subsistence; and he evidently availed himself of passing events and personal circumstances to obtain a very precarious support. Yet in private life his ill-fortune would seem to have followed him; "for no man," he tells us, "was ever assaulted with a more dangerous stratageme of cosonage than myselfe, with which my life and living was hardly beset." But these "four notable couseners, the instrumentes of his greatest troubles, in the prime of their mischievous enterprises, being with soudaine death and vexation straungelie visited," he too unchristianly exulted in his triumph when he declared, "no man hath more cause to thank God for a free delivery than myselfe; nor anie man ever sawe more suddaine vengeance inflicted upon his adversaries, than I myself of mine." "Mishap and hard fortune," during the persecution in question, he has pathetically depicted in the concluding part of his *Rocke of Regard*, under the assumed name of Paulus Plasmos. When or where our author died has not yet been ascertained. It remains to enumerate the several productions of his pen, "to the intent (as his printer says) the variable humours of men, which delygth as much in chaynge as they differ in opinion, may be satisfied with the varietie of Mr. Whetstone's workes and writinge." These are:

1. The *Rocke of Regard*, divided into foure parts: The Castle of Delight; The Garden of Unthriftinesse; The Arbour of Virtue; The Orchard of Repentance. 1576.

2. A Remembrance of the Wel-employed Life and Godly End of George Gaskoigne, Esquire. 1577.

3. The right excellent and famous Historye of Promos and Cassandra, divided into Two Commicall Discourses. 1578. The foundation of Shakspeare's Measure for Measure.

4. An Heptameron of Civill Discourses concerning the Christmasse Exercise of sundrie well-counted Gentlemen and Gentlewomen. 1582. Republished in 1593, under the title of "Amelia." It is a translation, with pieces of poetry interspersed, of the Hecatommithi of Giraldo Cinthio.

5. A Mirour for Magistrates of Cyties; and hereunto is added, A Touchstone for the Time, containyng many perillous Mischeifes bred in the bowels of the Citie of London, by the infection of some of those Sanctuaries of Iniquitie. 1584.

6. A Mirour of Treue Honnour and Christian Nobilitie, exposing the Life, Death, and divine Virtues of Frauncis Earle of Bedford, &c. 1585. This poem is reprinted in Park's "Heliconia."

7. The Englysh Mirour: a Regard wherein al estates may behold the Conquests of Envy, &c. 1586.

8. The Honorable Reputation of a Souldier; drawn out of the Lives, Documents, and Disciplines of the most renouned Romaine, Grecian, and other famous Martialists. 1585-6.

9. Sir Phillip Sidney; his honorable life, his valiant death, and true virtues: a perfect Myrror for the followers both of Man and Mercury. 1586.

10. The Censure of a Loyall Subject upon certaine noted Speache and Behaviours of those fourteen notable traitors (Ballard, Babington, &c.), as also of the Scottish Queen, now cut off by justice, as the principall roote of all their treasons. 1586.

11. The Lyfe and Death of the great and honorable Magestrat Sir Nycholas Bacon, late Lord Keeper.

12. The Lyfe and Death of the good L. Dyer.

13. The Lyfe and Death of the noble Earle of Sussex.

14. A Panoplie of Devices.

15. The Image of Christian Justice.

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## RICHARD ROBINSON.

(Born circa 1550.)

Richard Robinson, born in London, and a retainer of the Earl of Shrewsbury, by whom he was employed as a domestic sentinel over the Queen of Scots, is the author of *Robinson's Poems; certain selected histories for Christian recreations, with their several moralizations* (1576). He wrote also *The Rueful Tragedy of Hermidos* (1569); *The Vineyard of Virtue* (1579); *The Auncient Order, Societie, and Unitie laudable of Prince Arthure, and his Knyghte Armorie of the Round Table* (1583); and a number of other poems, with various works in prose. We have by Clement Robinson, perhaps a brother of Richard, *A Handful of pleasant Delites, containing sundrie newe Sonets and delectable Histories, in divers kinds and meeter* (1584).

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## EDMUND SPENSER.

(Circa 1553-1599.)

Edmund Spenser, descended from the ancient and honourable family of Spenser, was born in London, in East Smithfield, about the year 1553. He was admitted as a sizar of Pembroke Hall, in Cambridge, May 20th, 1562, proceeded B. A. Jan. 16th, 1573, and M. A. June 26th, 1576. Of his proficiency during this time a favourable opinion may be drawn from the many classical allusions in his works. It is now fully disproved that Spenser was an unsuccessful candidate for a fellowship in Pembroke Hall, in competition with Andrews, afterwards successively bishop of Chester, Ely, and Winchester. The rival of Andrews was Thomas Dove, afterwards bishop of Peterborough. But from one of Harvey's letters to Spenser, it appears that some disagreement had taken place between our poet and the master or tutor of the society to which he belonged, which terminated his prospects of further advancement in it, without lessening his veneration for the University at large, of which he always speaks with filial regard.

When he left Cambridge, he is supposed to have gone to reside with some friends in the north of England, probably as a tutor. At what time he began to display his poetical powers is uncertain; but as genius cannot long be concealed, it is probable that he was already known as a votary of the Muses among his fellow-students. There are several poems in the *Theatre for Worldings*, a collection published in the year in which he became a member of the University, which are thought to have come from his pen. The Visions in this work were probably the first sketch of those which now form a part of acknowledged productions. His *Shepherd's Calendar* was published in 1579. The tenderness of complaint in this elegant poem appears to have been inspired by a mistress whom he has recorded under the name of Rosalind. He is supposed also to allude to the cruelty of this same lady in book vi. of the *Faerie Queene*, under the name of Mirabella.

The year preceding the publication of this poem he had been advised by his friend Harvey to remove to London, where he was introduced to Sir Philip Sidney, and by him recommended to his uncle, the Earl of Leicester. There is a wide difference of opinion, however, among Spenser's biographers, as to the time and mode of the former of these events. Some suppose that his acquaintance with Sir Philip Sidney was the consequence of his having presented to him the ninth canto of the *Faerie Queene*. Others think that his first introduction was owing to the dedication of the *Shepherd's Calen-*

*dar*; but a long letter from Spenser to Harvey, which Todd has preserved, proves that he was known to Sidney previous to the publication of the *Shepherd's Calendar* in 1579.\*

It is certain that, in consequence of this introduction, by whatever means procured, he became a welcome guest in Sir Philip's family, and was invited to their seat at Penshurst in Kent. Under such patronage the dedication of the *Calendar*, when finished, to "Maister Philip Sidney" became a matter of course, as a mark of respectful acknowledgment for the kindness he had received. The praise, however, bestowed on this poem was but moderate, and the name of the author appears to have been for some time not generally known. Dove, whose translation of it into Latin is extant in the library of Caius College, Cambridge, speaks of it not only as an "unowned" poem, but as almost buried in oblivion. On the other hand, Abraham Fraunce selected from it examples to illustrate *The Lawier's Logike*; but Fraunce, it may be said, was the friend of Sir Philip Sidney, and would naturally be made acquainted with, and perhaps be induced to admire, the productions of a poet whom he favoured.

The patronage of men of genius in Spenser's age was frequently exerted in procuring for them public employments; and Spenser, we find, was very early introduced into the business of active life. In July 1580, when Arthur Lord Grey of Wilton left England as lord-lieutenant of Ireland, Spenser was appointed his secretary, probably on the recommendation of the Earl of Leicester. Although the office of secretary was not at that time of the same importance it is now, and much might not be expected in official business from a scholar and a poet, yet Spenser appears to have entered with zeal into political affairs, as far as they were connected with the character of the lord-lieutenant. In his *View of the State of Ireland*, which was writ-

\* If a certain story which is usually told upon this occasion were true, it must have been some time after. The story runs thus: It is said that he was a stranger to Sir Philip when he had begun to write his *Faerie Queene*; and that he took occasion to go to Leicester House, and to introduce himself by sending in to Sir Philip the ninth canto in the first book of that poem. Sir Philip was much surprised with the description of Despair in that canto, and is said to have shown an unusual kind of transport on the discovery of so new and uncommon a genius. After he had read some stanzas, he called his steward, and bade him give the person who brought those verses fifty pounds; but upon reading the next stanza he ordered the sum to be doubled. The steward was as much surprised as his master, and thought it his duty to make some delay in executing so sudden and lavish a bounty; but upon reading one stanza more, Sir Philip raised his gratuity to 200*l.*, and commanded the steward to give it immediately, lest, as he read farther, he might be tempted to give away his whole estate.

ten long after, he takes frequent opportunities to vindicate the measures and reputation of that nobleman, and had indeed evidently studied the politics of Ireland with great success.

After holding this situation about two years, Lord Grey returned to England, probably accompanied by his secretary. Their connexion was certainly not dissolved; for in 1586 Spenser obtained, by his lordship's interest and that of Leicester and Sidney, a grant of 3028 acres in the county of Cork, out of the forfeited lands of the Earl of Desmond. As far as Sir Philip Sidney was concerned, this was his last act of kindness to our poet, for he died in October of that year, "praised, wept, and honoured" by every man of genius or feeling.

Such were the terms of the royal patent, that Spenser was now obliged to return to Ireland in order to cultivate the land assigned to him. He accordingly fixed his residence at Kilcolman in the



KILCOLMAN CASTLE.

county of Cork, a place admirably accommodated to the taste of a poet by its romantic and diversified scenery. Here he was visited by Sir Walter Raleigh, with whom he had formed an intimacy on his first arrival in Ireland, who proved a second Sidney to his poetical ardour, and appears to have urged him to that composition which constitutes his highest fame. In 1590 he published the *Faerie Queene*; disposed into Twelve Books, fashioning XII. Morall Vertues. This edition contains only the first three books, commendatory poems from Raleigh, Harvey, and others, and the author's own sonnets to various

persons of distinction. Todd remarks that in that age of adulation, it was usual for the author to present, with a copy of his publication, poetical addresses to his superiors, and to print them afterwards.

It appears certain that these three books of the *Faerie Queene* were written in Ireland. In a conversation extracted from his friend Ludowick Bryskett's *Discourse of Civill Life*, Spenser is made to say : "I have already undertaken a work in heroical verse, under the title of a *Faerie Queene* ; tending to represent all the morall virtues, assigning to every virtue a knight to be patron and defender of the same, in whose actions, feats of arms, and chivalry, the operations of that virtue whereof he is the protector are to be expressed, and the vices and unruly appetites that oppose themselves against the same to be beaten downe and overcome."

Such was his original design in this undertaking; and having prepared three books for the press, it is probable that he accompanied Raleigh to England with a view to publish the work. Raleigh afterwards introduced him to Queen Elizabeth, whose favour is supposed by some to have extended to his being appointed poet laureate ; but Elizabeth, as Malone has proved, had no poet laureate. She indeed, in February 1591, conferred on Spenser a pension of 50*l.* a year, which he enjoyed till his death ; but the title of laureate is not given in his patent.

The terms of this patent, which was discovered some years since in the Rolls Chapel, tends to rescue the character of Lord Burleigh from the imputation of having been hostile to our poet. The oldest date of this reproach is in Fuller's *Worthies*, a book published at the distance of more than seventy years from the event ; yet on this authority, which has been copied by almost all the biographers of Spenser, it has been said that Burleigh intercepted the pension, as too much to be given to a "ballad-maker ;" and that when the queen, upon Spenser's presenting some poems to her, ordered him the gratuity of 100*l.*, Burleigh asked, "What ! all this for a song !" on which the queen replied, "Then give him what is reason." The story concludes, that Spenser having long waited in vain for the fulfilment of the royal order, presented to her the following ridiculous memorial :

"I was promised on a time  
To have reason for a rhyme :  
From that time unto this season  
I received nor rhyme nor reason ;"—

on which he was immediately paid ; but for the whole of this representation there appears no foundation.

After the publication of the *Faerie Queene*, and Spenser's return to Ireland, the fame he had now obtained induced a publisher to col-

lect and print his smaller pieces (one of which only is said to have been a republication), under the title of *Complaints: containing sundrie small poems of the World's Vanitie; viz. 1. The Ruins of Time; 2. The Teares of the Muses; 3. Virgil's Gnat; 4. Prosopopœia, or Mother Hubbard's Tale; 5. The Ruines of Rome, by Bellay; 6. Minopotmos, or the Tale of the Butterflie; 7. Visions of the World's Vanitie; 8. Bellay's Visions; 9. Petrarch's Visions.*

Spenser appears to have returned to London about the end of 1591, as his next publication, the beautiful elegy on Douglas Howard, daughter of Henry Lord Howard, entitled *Daphnaida*, is dated Jan. 1, 1592. From this period there is a long interval in the history of our poet, which was probably passed in Ireland, but of which we have no account. It would appear, however, that he did not neglect those talents of which he had already given such favourable specimens. In 1595 he published the pastoral of *Colin Clouts come Home again*, and with it the pastoral elegy of *Astrophel*, devoted entirely to the memory of Sir Philip Sidney.

It is conjectured that in the same year appeared his *Amoretti*, or Sonnets, in which the poet gives the progress of his addresses to a less obdurate lady than Rosalind, and whom he afterwards married, if the *Epithalamion*, published with the sonnets, is allowed to refer to that event. Mr. Todd deduces from various passages that his mistress's name was Elizabeth, and that the marriage took place in Ireland, on St. Barnabas' Day, 1594. Other biographers seem to be of opinion that he had lost a first wife, and that the courtship of a second inspired the *Amoretti*. Where we have no other evidence than the expression of a man's feeling, and that man a poet of excursive imagination, the balance of probabilities may be equal. Spenser was now at the age of forty-one, somewhat too late for the ardour of youthful passion so feelingly given in his sonnets; but, on the other hand, if he had a first wife, we have no account of her, and the children he left were by the wife he now married.

The *Four Hymns on Love and Beauty*, which the author informs us were written in his youth as a warning to thoughtless lovers; and the *Prothalamion*, in honour of the double marriages of the Ladies Elizabeth and Catherine Somerset, to H. Guildford and W. Peter, Esqs., were published in 1596. In the same year the second part of the *Faerie Queene* appeared, with a new edition of the former part. This contained the fourth, fifth, and sixth books. Of the remaining six, which were to complete the original design, two imperfect cantos of *Mutabilitie* only have been recovered, and were first introduced into the folio edition of the *Faerie Queene* printed in 1609, as a part of the lost book entitled the *Legend of Constance*.

It is necessary, however, in this place to notice a question which has been contested with much eagerness by Spenser's biographers and critics, namely, whether any part of the *Faerie Queene* has been lost, or whether the author did not leave the work unfinished as we now have it. Sir James Ware informs us that the poet finished the latter part of the *Faerie Queene* in Ireland, "which was soon after unfortunately lost by the disorder and abuse of his servants, whom he had sent before him into England." This statement has been controverted by various biographers; but it is materially corroborated by an epigram written by Sir John Stradling, and published in 1607, cited by Todd, which plainly intimates that certain manuscripts of Spenser were burnt in the rebellion of 1598.

The same year, 1596, appears to have been the time when Spenser presented his political and only prose work, *The View of the State of Ireland*, to the queen. Mr. Todd having seen four copies of it in manuscript, concludes that he presented it also to the great officers of state, and perhaps to others. Why it was allowed to remain in manuscript so long as until 1603, when Sir James Ware published it from Archbishop Usher's copy, has not been explained. If, as Mr. Todd conjectures, it was written at the command of the queen, and in order to reconcile the Irish to her government, why did it not receive the publicity which so important an object required? It is more probable, from the perusal of the work as we now have it, that it was not considered by the court as of a healing tendency; and the extract from some of the manuscript copies which Todd had an opportunity of procuring, seems to confirm this conjecture. Viewed in another light, it displays much political knowledge, and traces the troubles of that country, in many instances, to their real causes. It is valuable also on account of the author's skill in delineating the actual state of Ireland. "Civilisation," says Mr. Ledwith, the learned Irish antiquary, "having almost obliterated every vestige of our ancient manners, the remembrance of them is only to be found in Spenser; so that he may be considered, at this day, as an Irish antiquary." It ought not to be omitted that in a note on one of the manuscript copies of this work, Spenser is styled "clerke of the counsell of the province of Mounster."

In 1597 he is said to have returned to Ireland; and in a letter from Queen Elizabeth to the Irish government, dated Sept. 30, 1598, was recommended to be sheriff of Cork. The rebellion of Tyrone, however, took place in October, and with such fury as to compel Spenser and his family to leave Kilcolman. In the confusion of flight, manuscripts would be forgotten, for even one of the children was left behind; and the rebels, after carrying off the goods, burnt

the house and this infant in it. Spenser arrived in England with a heart broken by these misfortunes, and died January following, 1599, in the forty-sixth year of his age.

There are some circumstances respecting Spenser's death which have been variously represented. Mr. Todd, from unquestionable evidence, has fixed the day January 16, 1599, and the place an inn or lodging-house in King-street, Westminster; the time, therefore, which elapsed from his arrival in England to his death was very short. But it has been asserted that he died in extreme poverty, which, considering how highly favoured he was by the queen only a month before he was compelled to leave Ireland, seems wholly incredible. The only foundation for the report appears to have been an expression of Camden's, intimating that he returned to England poor, which may be quite true, without affording any reason to suppose that he remained poor. His pension of 50*l.*, no inconsiderable sum in those days, continued to be paid; and to conceive that he lost his friends at a time when he was a sufferer in the cause of government, seems a needless imputation on them.

Spenser's remains were interred in Westminster Abbey, near those of Chaucer; and the funeral expenses were defrayed by the Earl of Essex, too much a friend to literature to have allowed Spenser to starve, as has been suggested, and afterwards insult his remains by a sumptuous funeral. The monument was erected by Anne, Countess of Dorset, about thirty years after Spenser's death. His grandson Hugolin, after the restoration of Charles II., was replaced by the Court of Claims in as much of the Irish lands as could be found to have been Spenser's. The property, forfeited by Hugolin for his attachment to James II., was granted to another descendant, William Spenser, by the interest of Montague, Earl of Halifax.

Besides the works already enumerated, Spenser is the author of various sonnets. The lost pieces of Spenser are said to have been: 1. *Translation of Ecclesiastes*; 2. *Translation of the Song of Songs*; 3. *The Dying Pelican*; 4. *The Hours of our Lord*; 5. *The Sacrifice of a Sinner*; 6. *The Seven Psalms*; 7. *Dreams*; 8. *The English Poet*; 9. *Legends*; 10. *The Court of Cupid*; 11. *The Hell of Lovers*; 12. *Purgatory*; 13. *A Se'nnight Slumber*; 14. *Pageants*; 15. *Nine Comedies*; 16. *Stemmata Dudleiana*; 17. *Epithalamion Thamesis*. If his pen was thus prolific, there is little reason to suppose that he might not have had leisure and industry to have nearly completed his *Faerie Queene* before the fatal rebellion which terminated all his labours.

"We see nothing in Spenser," writes Proctor, "of that strange, irregular spirit which impelled Shakspeare all round the world, and led Milton soaring to the stars; but a dreamy idleness, which fed

on earthly beauty and earthly fortunes, and was content to live for ever on haunted slopes, to thread the mazes of enchantment, and to repose in the chambers of sensual delight.

“Nevertheless, Spenser was a moral poet. He was the poet of moral romance. He aimed at being didactic (after a pleasant fashion), yet he also loved to loiter by the way, and gave himself up to luxurious musings. He did not turn aside from love, or desire, or lust, or gluttony, or a revel ; but met and enjoyed them all, or made them subservient to his main design. He steeped his mind in pleasure, and gave forth the result like a distillation, clear and refined ; not stripped of its internal nature or original colour, but merely with the husk and coarse deformity left behind. There never was a man who so revelled in description, or whose fancy lived so entirely out of the bustle and resort of the busy world, as Spenser. He is the poet of leaves and flowers ; the forests, and the fountains, and the smooth clear lakes are his domain ; and these he has peopled with a grotesque race, such as we look for in vain on the dusty and common road of life,—creatures of fairy-land and of the Muses, whose lives, like their own laurels, shall flourish and look green for ever.”



### GEORGE PEELE.

(Circa 1553-1597.)

George Peele was born in or about 1553, it is believed in Devonshire, of obscure parents, by some patron of whom he was sent to



the University of Oxford, in the capacity of a servitor or poor scholar; where his quick parts attracting the notice and approbation of his superiors, obtained for him a studentship of Pembroke College, whence he afterwards removed to Christ Church, and proceeded through the regular academical course. He took his degree of B.A. 12th June, 1577, determined during the following Lent, and was made M.A. on 6th July, 1579. During his residence at the University he was esteemed "a most noted poet;" and Mr. Dyce, in the preface to his edition of Peele's works, conceives it probable that the *Tale of Troy*, which our author published in 1589, and which he calls "an old poem of mine own," was written before he left Oxford. On the other hand, it is a question whether Peele, who it is supposed left the University for London soon after taking his M.A. degree, would have allowed a manuscript by which money was to be made to remain so long unapplied to that, with him ever peculiarly, essential object. Coming to London, with design to turn the poetical capacity he had manifested at Oxford to the purpose of a livelihood, he made acquaintance with several of the leading writers of that day, Marlowe, Robert Greene, Thomas Nash, Thomas Lodge, Thomas Watson, and others. "Beyond all these places," writes Dekker, in his *Knight's Conjuring*, describing the Elysian Fields, "is there a grove which stands by itself like an island; for a stream, that makes music in the running, clasps it round about like a hoop-girdle of chrystal. Laurels grow so thick on all the banks of it, that lightning itself, if it came thither, hath no power to pierce through them. It seems without a desolate and unfrequented wood, for those within are retired into themselves; but from them came forth such harmonious sounds, that birds build nests only in the trees there to teach tunes to their young ones prettily. This is called the Grove of Bay Trees, and to this concert-room resort none but the children of Phœbus, poets and musicians: the one creates the ditty, and gives it the life or number; the other lends it voice, and makes it speak music. When these happy spirits sit asunder, their bodies are like so many stars; and when they join together in several troops, they show together like so many heavenly constellations. Full of pleasant bowers and quaint arbours is all this walk—whilst Marlowe, Greene, and Peele had got under the shade of a large vine, laughing to see Nash (that was but newly come to their college) still haunted with the sharp and satirical spirit that followed him here upon earth; for Nash inveighed bitterly (as he had wont to do) against dry-fisted patrons, accusing them of his untimely death, because if they had given his Muse that cherishment which she most worthily deserved, he had fed to his dying day on fat capons, burnt sack and sugar, and not so desperately have ventured his life and

shortened his days by keeping company with pickle-herrings." Peele's first contribution to literature was in the shape of some commendatory verses prefixed to his friend Thomas Watson's *Passionate Centurie of Love* (1581). His first drama, *The Arraignment of Paris*, was printed in 1584, and Nash thus speaks of it and of its author: "For the last, though not the least of them all, I dare commend him unto all that know him, as the chiefe supporter of pleasure now living, the Atlas of poetry, and *primus verborum artifex*: whose first increase, *The Arraignment of Paris*, might pleade to your opinions his pregnant dexteritie of wit and manifold varietie of invention, wherein (*me judice*) he goeth a step beyond all that write." One source of income enjoyed by our poet—what his regular sources were we know not, and yet, wretchedly as he lived, he must have had something beyond the remuneration for a few occasional plays and poems—was the fee paid by the corporation of London to the inventor of the pageant which then filled the place of the imbecile and tawdry lord mayor's show of later years. In 1589 Peele published a *Farewell* to the English expedition then about to sail for Portugal, and appended to it the *Tale of Troy* already mentioned, which the author gravely announces that he put forth in order to arouse his countrymen to imitate the example of their glorious and renowned predecessors, the Troyans. The *Farewell* Mr. Dyce pronounces a most energetic and harmonious composition, breathing a fine spirit of patriotism. In the same year appeared his *Eclogue Gratulatorie, entituled to the Honourable and Renowned Shepheard of Albion's Arcadia, Robert Earle of Essex and Eve, for his welcome into England from Portugall*. In 1590 Peele was employed to devise the pageant performed on the occasion of Sir Henry Lee's resigning, by reason of old age, his office of queen's champion, a celebration narrated by Peele himself in his poemet entitled *Polyhymnia*. In 1591 was produced by our poet, *Descensus Astreeæ, the Device of a Pageant borne before Mr. William Web, the lord mayor of that year*. In the same year appeared his *Hunting of Cupid*, a dramatic pastoral. Our poet's manners and morality would appear to have been none of the best, judging from an appeal made to him in 1592 by the dying hand of Robert Greene, in his *Groatsworth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance*, which warns him, as one infected with such sins, against irreligious oaths, "for from the blasphemers house a curse shall not depart;" against "drunkenness, which wasteth the wit, and maketh men all equal unto beasts;" against "lust, as the deathsmans of the soule;" and against defiling the temple of the Holy Ghost. "Abhor those epicures," emphatically writes the dying penitent, "whose loose life hath made religion loathsome to your

cares; and when they soothe you with terms of mastership, remember Robert Greene, whom they have often so flattered, perishes now for want of comfort. Remember, gentlemen, your lives are like so many light-tapers, that are with care delivered to all of you to maintaine: these with wind-pufft wrath may be extinguished, with drunkennesse put out, with negligence let fall; for man's time of itself is not so short but it is more shortened by sinne." When Peele's famous *Chronicle of King Edward the First* was first created is not known; it was first printed in 1593, and was long a great favourite with play-goers. The subject, as Nash describes it, "is borrowed out of our English chronicles, wherein our forefathers' valiant acts (that have lien long buried in rustie brasse and worme-eaten bookes) are revived, and they themselves raised from the grave of oblivion, and brought to plead their aged honours in open presence: then which, what can be a sharper re-prooffe to these degenerate effeminate daies of ours?" The work is thus characterised by Mr. Dyce: "As one of the earliest of our chronicle histories, a species of dramatic composition which afterwards became so fascinating in the hands of Shakspeare, *Edward the First* is a curious and interesting production. A vein of extravagance pervades the whole play; but the tragic portion is occasionally written with power, and the comic part is by no means destitute of humour."\* In the same year (1593) Peele wrote his *Honour of the Garter*, in commemoration of the Earl of Northumberland and four other noblemen and gentlemen being created knights of the Garter. In the prologue to this piece is an enthusiastic apostrophe to Marlowe, then just dead. The anonymous tragedy, *The Battie of Alcazan*, admitted by Mr. Dyce among the works of Peele, was printed in 1593, though probably acted some time before. In 1595 was printed *The Old Wive's Tale*, a play which had also, in all probability, been acted some years before, and which is especially interesting as the production from which, in the opinion of competent critics, Milton partly derived the plan and characters of *Comus*. *David and Bethsabe*, Peele's greatest work, was not printed till 1599, though acted much earlier. It is a remain of the fashion of Scripture plays; and the author's genius seems to have been kindled by reading the Prophets and the Song of Solomon. In tenderness and poetic beauty, Mr. Dyce considers this drama to vie with any of the tragedies of Marlowe. Peele, it is believed, wrote many other plays; but of those not descended to us, some were, conjecturally, abandoned to decay in the manager's room of the theatre, unprinted, and others, in a printed

\* Preface to Peele's Works. Pickering. 1829.

shape, consumed in the Great Fire of London, which was very destructive to literature. "I hear there is great loss of books in St. Paul's Churchyard," writes Pepys, "and at their Hall also, which they value at 150,000*l.*, some booksellers being wholly undone." One other play by Peele is known from his *Merrie Conceited Jests*,—*The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek*; Hiren (Irene), the heroine, being the Hiren ludicrously cited by Ancient Pistol. Peele contributed several poemets to *The Phoenix Nest*. His *Merry Ballad of the Hawthorn Tree* is printed by Mr. Dyce from a manuscript in the Cottonian Library. The date of Peele's death is not known. "This person," says Anthony à Wood, always especially good-natured to the poets whom he mentions, "was living in his middle age in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth, but when or where he died I cannot tell; for so it is, and always hath been, that most poets die poor, and consequently obscurely, and a hard matter it is to trace them to their graves." We learn from *The Merrie Conceited Jests* of George Peele, a tract professing to give an account of the course of his life and how he lived, that he resided at the Bankside, over against Blackfriars, was married, and had a daughter, whom the compiler of the tract represents as an accomplice, at ten years old, of the low sharpening tricks and frauds by which Peele is described as making a living. This tract Mr. Dyce regards as a work of fiction, containing a slight intermixture of truth. The hero of *The Puritan, or the Widow of Walling Street*, George Pyeboard (Peel), is supposed to have been drawn from Peele and his rogueries. That Peele was ever a professional actor, as some commentators have suggested, Mr. Dyce altogether disbelieves.

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#### ANTHONY MUNDAY.

(1553-1633.)

Anthony Munday, born in 1553—it is not known where—was bred at Rome, at the English College, whence he was sometimes designated *the Pope's Scholar* (he afterwards, however, turned Protestant). On his return to England, he published, in 1579, his first production, the *Mirror of Mutability*, and became connected with the theatres also as an actor. It would appear, indeed, that before he went abroad he had strutted an hour upon the stage; for a popish attack upon him, after his conversion to Protestantism, speaks of him as having "returned home to his first vomit, and being hist from his stage for folly." The title-page of one of his later works describes him as "citizen and draper of London;" but whatever his

daily occupation, he was collaterally, at all events, much employed not only by Henslowe and other managers as a dramatist, but also by the booksellers as a pamphleteer and compiler. In 1582 he published a narrative of his experiences in Italy, under the title of *The Englishman's Roman Life, or how Englishmen live at Rome*. In the same year he published *The Discoverie of Edward Campion, the Jesuit*, a work which gave great offence to the Papists. In the same year appeared *A breefe and true Report of the Execution of certayne Traytours at Tiborne, the xxviii. and xxx. days of May 1582, gathered by A. M., who was there present*. He signs the dedication at full length, "A. Munday," and mentions that he had been a witness against some of the offenders. The persons he saw executed were Thomas Foord, John Short, Robert Johnson, William Filbre, Luke Kirbie, Lawrence Richardson, and Thomas Cottom; and our poet-polemist seems to have been publicly employed to confute them at the foot of the gallows, and to convince the populace that they were traitors and Papists, denying the supremacy of Queen Elizabeth. He had there a long dispute with Kirbie upon matters of fact; and, according to his own showing, was guilty, while abroad, at least of a little duplicity. Munday was also a city poet, and a composer and contriver of the city pageants. Among his productions of this class are, *Chryso-Triumphos*, &c. (1611), a pageant in honour of the Goldsmiths; *Triumphs of Old Drapery*, &c. (1616); *Metropolis Coronata* (1615); *Chrysantaleia, or Honour of the Fishermen*, &c. (1616). Meres, from his invention in these and similar shows, calls him *the best plotter* of them all; and Webbe, in his *Discourse of English Poetrie*, speaks of him as "an earnest traveller in this art, very excellent works, especially upon nymphs and shepherds, well worthy to be viewed and to be esteemed as rare poetry." Ben Jonson hereupon, in *The Case is altered*, hugely ridiculed Munday, in his capacity of city poet, under the name of Don Antonio Ballendino. At the time this play was written (1598), Munday was living in Cripple-gate, whence he dates his translation of the *History of Palmendos*. His connection with the city shows appears to have extended beyond the poetical department; for in 1613 he is mentioned by Middleton, who in that year wrote the pageant (*The Triumph of Truth*), as having furnished the *Triumph with apparel and porters*. Munday died 10th August, 1633, and was buried in the church of St. Stephen's, Coleman-street, where a monument was erected in his honour. He was a very voluminous and various writer, both in prose and verse, original and translated, and appears to have sometimes published pseudonymously. Ritson ascribes to him the translation, under the name of Lazarus Piot, of *The Orator*, written in French by Alexander

Sylvain, from the dedication to which it may be inferred that Munday, if the translator, had been in the army,—a supposition aided by *A Ballad made by Ant. Munday, of the Encouragement of an English Soldier, to his Fellow-Mates*, which was licensed to John Charlewood in 1579. *A Banquet of Daintie Conceits*, first identified by Mr. Collier, was published in 1588. The character of “a learned antiquarian,” ascribed to him on his monument, is strengthened by a new edition of Stowe’s *Survey*, which he published in 1618, with additions that he states himself to have received from the author’s own hands.

The subsequent catalogue of plays, which Munday wrote either alone or in conjunction with others, is derived by Mr. Collier, in his *Supplement* to Dodsley, from the materials supplied by Malone:

1. *Mother Redcap*. By Munday and Drayton. Dec. 1597. Not printed.
2. *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon*. By Munday. February 1598. Printed in 1601.
3. *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon*. By Munday and Chettle. February 1598. Printed in 1601.
4. *The Funeral of Richard Cordelion*. By Robert Wilson, Chettle, Munday, and Drayton. May 1598. Not printed.
5. *Valentine and Orson*. By Richard Hathwaye and Munday. July 1598. Not printed.
6. *Chance Medley*. By Robert Wilson, Munday, Drayton, and Dekker. August 1598. Not printed.
7. *Owen Tudor*. By Drayton, Hathwaye, Munday, and Wilson. January 1600. Not printed.
8. *Fair Constance of Rome*. By Munday, Hathwaye, Drayton, and Dekker. June 1600. Not printed.
9. *Fair Constance of Rome*. Part II. By the same authors. June 1600. Not printed.
10. *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey*. By Munday, Drayton, Chettle, and Wentworth Smith. Nov. 12, 1601. Not printed.
11. *Two Harpies*. By Munday, Dekker, Drayton, Middleton, and Webster. May 1602. Not printed.
12. *The Widow’s Charm*. By Munday. July 1602. Printed in 1607, as Malone conjectures, under the title of “*The Puritan* ; or, the *Widow of Watling-street*,” and ascribed to Shakspeare.
13. *The Set at Tunnis*. By Munday. 1602. It has been suggested that this play may be the same with “*The World toss’d at Tennis*,” by Middleton and W. Rowley, and that Munday had only a share in the authorship.
14. *The first part of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle*. By Munday, Drayton, R. Wilson, and R. Hathwaye. Of this play two editions were published in 1600, the one with, the other without, the name of Shakspeare on the title-page ; but Mr. Malone discovered, from the registers of the Stationers’ Company, that he was not concerned in it.

## JOHN LYLY.

(Born 1554, died circa 1601.)

John Lyly, born in the Weald of Kent, in 1554, was admitted of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1571. He proceeded B.A. in 1573, and in 1574 wrote a letter to Lord Burleigh, couched in terms of the most extravagant adulation, entreating his influence to have him made a fellow of the college. What the result of the application was does not appear; but we find that he proceeded M.A. in 1577. In 1578, or the early part of 1579, he was rusticated for, as he himself states, "having glanced at some abuses." He removed to Cambridge, and thence to London, where he became a follower of the court; and, by the favour of Lord Burleigh, was recommended to Queen Elizabeth, who, it is said, was highly pleased with him, and honoured some of his plays, of which he wrote nine, with patronage of a practical kind.

The first thing he published was a romance called *Euphues* (1579), which being composed in a new kind of language, its phraseology became so much the vogue, that all the ladies were his scholars,—she who did not speak Euphuism being as little regarded at court as though she could not speak French. He appears to have been at one time in the service of Lord Oxford, in some position of trust, and to have been dismissed for a breach of that trust; an imputation, however, which he strenuously repudiates. Before 1589 he had produced six dramatic pieces, chiefly written for court entertainments; and to these he subsequently added three others, seven of the nine being in prose, one in rhyme, and one in blank verse: 1. *Alexander and Campaspe*; 2. *Sappho and Phaon*; 3. *Galathea*; 4. *Midas*; 5. *Mother Bomby*; 6. *Maid's Metamorphosis*; 7. *Endymion*; 8. *Woman in the Moon*; 9. *Love's Metamorphosis*. Besides these productions, Lyly was also the author of a tract called *Pap with a Hatchet* (1589), which was written against Martin Mar-Prelate, and is, says Mr. Collier, so lively a piece of satirical bantering, as to afford some evidence that this was the style to which Lyly's talents naturally tended. Our author, who was at one time a candidate for the office of Master of the Revels, died, it is conjectured, not long after 1601; in which year his last play, *Love's Metamorphosis*, was printed.

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## NICHOLAS BRETON.

(1555-1624.)

We have scarcely any personal memorials of this poet. Mr. Ellis doubtfully identifies him with one Nicholas Breton, poet, born about 1555, the son of Captain John Breton, of Tamworth in Staffordshire, and who died, in 1624, at an estate he had purchased at Norton in Northamptonshire. Nicholas Breton, the satirical and humorous poet, was, at all events, living within the dates so given; for his *second* production, *The Works of a Young Wit*, was published in 1577. Ritson gives a long list of his numerous effusions, the general character of which may be collected from the titles of a few of them: *Pasquil's Passe and Passeth not* (1600); *Cornu-Copiae, Pasquil's Night-Cap, or an Antidote for the Head-Ache; A Mad World, my Masters; Mistake me not, or a Merry Dialogue betweene two travellers, the Taker and Mistaker*; and so on. A work of his, of another class, is indicated by Sir Egerton Brydges, *The Pilgrimage to Paradise*.

## THOMAS LODGE.

(1556-1625.)

Thomas Lodge, born of a respectable family in Lincolnshire, in 1556, was entered as a servitor at Trinity College, Oxford, in 1573. His poetical talents here early developed themselves in various pieces of considerable merit; and that these were, many of them, of the satirical kind, may perhaps account for his having left college, as it would seem, prematurely, and without honours. In 1582 we find him anathematised by Stephen Gosson, "as a vagrant person, visited by the heavy hand of God;" whence it has been inferred that, on leaving the university, he had betaken himself to the stage as a livelihood. In 1584 he was a student of Lincoln's Inn, and in this phase of his career produced several of his works, and among them his *Alarum against Usurers*. Between this period and 1590, he had, he himself informs us, "fallen from books to arms," and sailed with Captain Clarke to the island of Terceira and the Canaries; and again, in his *Margarite of America*, published 1596, he tells us that the work was "written in the Straits of Magellan, while on a voyage with Cavendish." In the previous year, 1595, had appeared his *Fig for Momus*, a collection of satires, epistles, and eclogues, many of them characterised by merit of a high order. In one of these, Lodge, speaking in



his own person, under the anagrammatical title of Golde, thus declares his resolution to abandon the ill-requited profession of poetry:

“ Which sound rewards, since this neglected time  
Repines to yield to men of high desert,  
I'll cease to ravel out my wits in rhyme,  
For such who make so base account of art ;  
And since by wit there is no means to climb,  
I'll hold the plough awhile, and ply the cart ;  
And if my Muse to wonted course return,  
I'll write and judge, peruse, commend, and burn.”

From Wood's account it would seem as though the more profitable pursuit selected by Lodge was that of physic, the Oxford biographer informing us that he went to study medicine at Avignon. This study must either have been very brief, or it must have commenced after 5 Nov. 1596, the date, “from my house at Low Layton,” of our poet's *Wit's Misery, and the World's Madness*. Whatever the occupation to which he applied himself, it seems to have engaged his whole time, for we have no literary memorials of him after 1596, unless a *Treatise of the Plague*, by Dr. Thomas Lodge, published in 1603, is to be considered his; the reason against which supposition is the author's statement in the dedication, that he “was bred and brought up in the city of London,” which our Thomas Lodge was not. It is a question, in like manner, to which of the two Thomas Lodges—if they be two, and not one and the same—are to be attributed a translation of *Josephus* (1609), and of *L. A. Seneca* (1614). Thomas Lodge, the poet, who is said to have been a Roman Catholic, and as such greatly patronised (in his physician phase) by his co-religionists, “made his last exit (of the plague, I think) in September 1625, leaving then behind him a widow, called Joan.”

As a poet, Collier places him in a rank superior to Greene, and in some respects inferior to Kyd. A collection of his pastoral and lyrical pieces, published in 1819, contains many specimens of beautiful versification, elegant thoughts, and natural imagery. From a novel by him, first published in 1590, under the title of *Rosalynde, Euphues's Golden Legacy, found after his death in his cell at Silixedra*, &c., Shakspeare took the story of *As you like it*; and of this production the critic just quoted (who has reprinted this tale in his *Shakspeare Library*) says, “that no higher praise can well be given to it; our admiration of many portions of it will not be diminished by a comparison with the work of our great dramatist.” Other writings of Thomas Lodge are:

1. A Defence of Stage Plays, in three divisions: Defence of Poetry; Defence of Music; Defence of Plays, 1580. This tract is now excessively rare; a

rarity accounted for by Lodge himself, who, in his *Alarum against Usurers*, says, "By reason of the slenderness of the subject (because it was in defence of plaies and play-makers), the godly and reverend that had to deal in the cause, misliking it, forbad the publishing." It was upon, as Lodge complains, "a private unperfect cōpye" of this suppressed pamphlet that Gosson penned his answer to the "Defence," entitled "Plays confuted in Five Actions."

2. An *Alarum against Usurers*: containing tryed experiences against worldly abuses, &c. Hereunto are annexed the delectable historie of Forbo-nius and Prisceria; with the lamentable complaint of Truth over England. 1584.

3. Scilla's *Metamorphosis*; interlaced with the unfortunate love of Glaucus. Whereunto is annexed the delectable discourse of the Discontented Satyre. 1589.

4. Catharos: Diogenes in his Singularity, &c., christened by him "A Nettle for Nice Noses." 1591.

5. Euphue's Shadow. Tract. 1592.

6. The Life and Death of William Longbeard, the most famous and wittie English traitor, borne in the citie of London, accompanied with many other most pleasant and prettie histories. 1593.

7. Phillis; honoured with Pastoral Sonnets, Elegies, and Amorous Delights. Whereunto is annexed the tragycall complaynt of Elstred. 1593.

8. The Wounds of Civil War. Lively set forth in the true Tragedies of Marius and Scilla, &c. Tragedy. 1594.

9. A Looking-glasse for London and England: a Tragi-Comedy. 1594. In this play our author was assisted by Robert Greene. The drama is founded upon Holy Writ, being the history of Jonah and the Ninevites.

10. The Devil conjured. 1596.

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GEORGE CHAPMAN.

(1557-1634.)

George Chapman was born in the year 1557, conjecturally at Hitchen in Hertfordshire. In 1574 he went to Trinity College, Oxford, "where," says Wood, "he was observed to be most excellent in the Latin and Greek tongues, but not in logic or philosophy; and therefore, I presume, was the reason why he took no degree there." In 1576 he came up to London, where he commenced a friendship with the best poets and writers of his time; and was shortly after noticed by Sir Thomas Walsingham, whose son afterwards continued to countenance him. Eventually he had the honour to rank among his patrons Henry Prince of Wales, and Carr Earl of Somerset; but the one dying, and the other being disgraced, it is questionable if he derived advantage equal to what he might have hoped from their distinguished notice. The share also that he had in writing *Eastward Hoe!* might have been a considerable hindrance to

his advancement, though Wood is inclined to believe that he held some situation under King James, or his consort Queen Anne. The death of Prince Henry seems to have affected him deeply: and in the dedication to his *Epicæde* on that occasion, he says, "It hath so stricken all my spirits to the earth, that I will never more dare to look up to any greatness; but resolving the little rest of my poor life to obscurity and the shadow of his death, prepare ever hereafter for the light of heaven."

Chapman is described by Wood to have been a man of a reverend aspect and graceful manner, religious and temperate, qualities which seldom meet (adds Wood, in his liberal way) in a poet; and was so highly esteemed by the clergy, that some of them have said, that as *Museus*, who wrote the lives of *Hero* and *Leander*, had two excellent scholars, *Thamarus* and *Hercules*, so had he in England, in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth, two excellent imitators in the same argument and subject, viz. *Christopher Marlowe* and *George Chapman*.

Chapman died in the parish of *St. Giles's-in-the-Fields*, London, on the 12th May, 1655, and was buried in the yard on the south side of the church in *St. Giles's*. Soon after, a monument was erected over his grave, built after the manner of the old Romans, at the expense and under the direction of his friend *Inigo Jones*, whereon is this engraven, "*Georgius Chapmannus, Poeta Homericus Philosophus verus (etsi Christianus Poeta) plusquam celebris*," &c.

Chapman, with few exceptions, confined himself to the drama; and though not to be ranked amongst the dramatic writers of the first order who adorned that distinguished period, he has left behind him memorials of great abilities. The following is a list of our poet's dramatic works:

1. *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*. Comedy. Acted Feb. 1595.
2. *Humorous Day's Mirth*. Comedy. 1599.
3. *All Fools*. Comedy. 1605.
4. *Gentleman Usher*. Comedy. 1606.
5. *Monsieur d'Olive*. Comedy. 1606.
6. *Bussy d'Ambois*. Tragedy. 1607.
7. *Cæsar and Pompey*. Tragedy. 1607.
- 8 and 9. *Conspiracy of Byron*. Tragedy, in two Parts. 1608.
10. *May Day*. Comedy. 1611.
11. *Widow's Tears*. Comedy. 1612.
12. *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*. Tragedy. 1613.
13. *Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn*. 1613.
14. *Two Wise Men and all the rest Fools*. 1619. *Oldys, Langbaine*, and others question whether this play was written by Chapman.
15. *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*. Tragedy.
16. *Revenge for Honour*. Tragedy.

17. *Eastward Hoe*. Comedy. 1605. Written in conjunction with Ben Jonson and Marston.

The *Fountain of New Fashions*, 1598; the *Will of a Woman*, 1598; the *World runs on Wheels*; the *Fatal Love*; the *Tragedy of the Yorkshire Gentlewoman and her Son*; the *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, are also plays that have been assigned to our poet. Chapman also produced "*Ovid's Banquet of Sauce*, a *Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy*, and his *amorous Zodiac*; to which is added, the *Amorous Contention of Phillis and Flora*, 1595;" *Andromeda Liberata*, or the *Nuptials of Perseus and Andromeda*, 1614; a *Free and Offenceless Justification of a late published and misrepresented Poem*, entitled "*Andromeda Liberata*;" *Hesiod's Georgics*, 1618; *Petrarch's Seaven Penitentiall Psalmes*; and a translation, by many critics deemed the finest, of *Homer*.

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### WILLIAM WARNER.

(Circa 1558-1609.)

William Warner, a native of Oxfordshire, born about 1558, probably published his first work at the age of twenty-five. He was educated at Oxford, but spent his time in the flowery paths of poetry, history, and romance, in preference to the dry pursuits of logic and philosophy; went without a degree to the metropolis, where he followed the profession of an attorney, and became distinguished among the minor poets. It is said that in the latter part of his life he was retained in the service of Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, to whom he dedicates his poems.

The following extract from the parish register of Amwell, Hertfordshire, describes when and where he died: "1608-1609, Master William Warner, a man of good yeares, and of honest reputation: by his profession an attorneye of the Common Pleas: author of *Albion's England*, dyinge suddenlye, in his bedde, without any former complaynt or sicknesse, on Thursday night, beeing the 9th day of March; was burried the Saturday following, and lyeth in the church at the corner under the stone of Walter Ffader."

His *Albion's England* was his principal work, and was not only a favourite with his own age, but has received very high praise from the critics of later times. It is an epitome of the *British History*, written with great learning, sense, and spirit; in some places fine to an extraordinary degree, of which an instance may be cited in the story of *Argentile and Curan*, "a tale," writes Mrs. Cooper, a sound critic, "full of beautiful incidents, in the Romantic taste, extremely affecting, rich in ornament, wonderfully various in style, and, in short, one of the most beautiful pastorals I ever met with." To this opinion, high as it is, Dr. Percy thinks nothing can be objected; un-

less, perhaps, an affected quaintness in some of the expressions, and an indelicacy in some of the pastoral images.

Warner's contemporaries ranked him on a level with Spenser, and called him the Homer and Virgil of the time. But Dr. Percy remarks, that he rather resembled Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* he seems to have taken for a model, having deduced a perpetual poem, from the deluge down to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, full of lively digressions and entertaining episode. Warner also wrote in prose, *Syrinx, or a Sevenfold Historie, handled with varietie of pleasant and profitable, both commical and tragical argument,* printed in 1597; a novel, or rather a series of stories, much in the style of Heliodorus's *Ethiopic romance*. He also appears to have translated Plautus's *Mencœchmi*.

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### ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

(1560-1595.)

Robert Southwell was born at St. Faith's, in Norfolk, of an ancient family, in 1560. After receiving his earlier education at Douai, he was sent for the purposes of maturer study to Rome, where, in 1576, he became a Jesuit, and in 1585 rose to the appointment of prefect of studies. He was sent, shortly afterwards, as a missionary to England, where, in July 1592, he was apprehended, not only as a Jesuit, but as a suspected conspirator against the government, and committed to the Tower. He remained in prison three years, in the course of which he appears to have undergone the torture several times, in consequence of his refusal to answer various questions of a character compromising his religion and his society. He was treated in other respects with cruel harshness, the dungeon in which he was confined being so noisome and filthy, that when he was brought out for examination, his clothes were covered with vermin. Upon this his father presented a petition to Queen Elizabeth, begging that, if his son had committed any thing for which, by the laws, he had deserved death, he might suffer death; but that meanwhile his son, a gentleman born, might be treated as a gentleman. Southwell himself, worn out with his ill-treatment, entreated to be brought to trial; and Cecil is said to have made the brutal remark, that "if he was in so much haste to be hanged, he should quickly have his desire." He was tried, found guilty, and executed at Tyburn, 21 Feb. 1595, with all the circumstances dictated by the old treason-laws of England. Throughout these scenes he

behaved with a mild fortitude, which nothing but a highly-regulated mind and satisfied conscience could have prompted.

"The life of Southwell," writes Mr. Chambers, "though short, was full of grief. The prevailing tone of his poetry is therefore that of a religious resignation to severe evils. Though composed under heavy persecutions, no trace of angry feeling against any human being or any human institution occurs in his poems. Ben Jonson says of one of them, had he written that piece of his, *The Burning Babe*, he would have been content to destroy many of his own. His writings, which were numerous, and doubtless at one time popular among the Catholics, have been collected in two volumes by Walter. Two of his prose compositions, *Mary Magdalene's Tears* and *The Triumph over Death*, are characterised by much fervid eloquence."

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### THOMAS WATSON.

(Circa 1560-1592.)

Thomas Watson, of whom very little personally is known, was born in London in or about 1560, and having pursued his studies at Oxford, returned to London, with the view to follow the law; but it is presumed, from his numerous literary productions and his early death, that he made little progress in that undertaking. His contributions to *Davison's Poetical Rhapsody*, and many of those to other collections, were reprinted in his *Hecatompatheia*, or *Passionate Century of Love*. He is the author of an elegant tribute to the memory of Sir Francis Walsingham; and as the secretary, after entertaining Queen Elizabeth at Barn Elms, died so poor, that his effects would not meet the expense of an adequate funeral, the poet's monody has the additional merit of disinterestedness. Dedicated to Lady Frances Sydney, it adverts incidentally to the services and untimely death of Sir Philip Sydney, and invokes Spenser, with his "never-stooping quill," to

"Calme the tempest of Diana's (Elizabeth's) breast,  
Whilst shee, for Melibœus' late remove,  
Afflicts her mind with over long unrest."

The elegy was first written in Latin, but it was immediately afterwards translated into English by its author. Thomas Watson died, as is supposed, in 1592.

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## HENRY CONSTABLE.

(Circa 1560-1612.)

Henry Constable, a member of the Yorkshire family of that name, was born somewhere about 1560, and proceeded B.A. at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1579. As a Catholic, he seems to have become expatriated, for we find him, in 1595, addressing an earnest request, from Paris, to Anthony Bacon, for permission to return home. "It was my fortune once," he says, "to be beloved of the most part of the most virtuous gentlemen of my country; neither think I that I have deserved their evil-thinking since. I trust I have given my Lord of Essex sufficiently to understand the dutiful affection I bear to my country; and all my Catholic countrymen that know me are witnesses how far I am against violent proceedings." He wrote a similar letter, in January 1596, from Rouen to the Countess of Shrewsbury; and finding these efforts vain, came privately over to London, where he was discovered, and imprisoned in the Tower until the autumn of 1604. What became of him afterwards is not known, but he was dead in 1616, since under that date we find Bolton, in his *Hypercritica*, speaking of him in the past tense: "Noble Henry Constable was a great master of the English tongue; nor had any gentleman of our nation a more pure, quick, or higher delivery of conceits." His productions were sonnets; one of these was printed in Davison's *Rhapsody*, and some sixty others were discovered in manuscript by Mr. Todd.

## THOMAS DELONEY.

(Circa 1560-1600.)

Thomas Deloney, who was a silk-weaver before he took to the weaving of rhymes, commenced writing about the year 1586, and acquired considerable popularity not only as a versifier, but as a writer of romances. His earliest ballad was published in the year above stated, and his other poetical compositions between that period and 1600, in or before which year he died. One of his compositions, *A Book for the Silk-weavers*, the subject being a dearth of corn, is denounced in a letter from the lord mayor of London to Lord Burleigh (July 25, 1596), as meriting punishment, the ballad dealing somewhat unceremoniously with the authorities, and actually, as we learn from Stowe, "bringing in the Queen, speaking with her people,

dialoguewise, in very fond and undecent sort" (foolish and unbecoming manner). Whether the balladeer was punished for this quasi-blasphemy, does not appear. The general character of his poetical compositions may be gathered from the title of the collection of them: "Strange Histories, or Songes and Sonets, of Kinges, Princes, Dukes, Lordes, Ladyes, Knights, and Gentlemen, very pleasant either to be read or songe; and a most excellent warninge for all estates. Imprinted at London for W. Barley, and are to be sold at his shop in Gracious Street, against S. Peter's Church. 1607." The ballads of the volume are twelve, their subjects such as these: "The Valiaunt Courage and Policie of the Kentishmen with long Tayles, whereby they kept their ancient Lawes and Customes, which William the Conqueror sought to take from them, to the tune of Rogero;" and again, "The Rebellion of Watt Tyler and Jack Straw, with others, against K. Richard the Second. To the tune of 'The Miller would a woing ride.'" His prose works, *Thomas à Reading*, *Jack à Newbury*, and *History of the Gentle Craft*, were frequently reprinted.

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 ROBERT GREENE.

(1560-1592.)

Robert Greene was born in the year 1560, at Norwich, the son of parents who, as he himself tells us, "were, for their gravity and honest life, well known and esteemed amongst their neighbours." After having graduated A. B. at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1578, and A. M. at Clare Hall in 1583, "being at the University of Cambridge," he tells us in his *Repentance*, "I light among wags as lewd as myself, with whom I consumed the flower of my youth, who drew me to travel into Italy and Spain, in which places I saw and practised such villany as is abominable to declare. Thus by their counsel I sought to furnish myself with coin, which I procured by cunning sleights from my father and my friends, and my mother pampered me so long, and secretly helped me to the oil of angels; so that being then conversant with notable braggarts, boon companions, and ordinary spendthrifts, that practised sundrie superficial studies, I became as a scion grafted into the same stock, whereby I did absolutely participate of their nature and qualities. At my return into England I ruffled out in my silks, in the habit of Malcontent, and seemed so discontent that no place would please me to abide in, nor no vocation cause me to stay myself in; but after I had by degrees proceeded master of arts (1583), I left the University, and away to London,



where (after I had continued some short time, and driven myself out of credit with sundry of my friends) I became an author of plays and a penner of love-pamphlets, so that I soon grew famous in that quality, that who, for that trade, grown so ordinary about London as Robin Greene. Young yet in years, though old in wickedness, I began to resolve that there was nothing bad that was profitable; whereupon I grew so rooted in all mischief, that I had as great a delight in wickedness as sundry have in godliness, and as much felicity I took in villany as others had in honesty. Yet let me confess a truth, that even once, and yet but once, I felt a fear and horror in my conscience; and then the terror of God's judgments did manifestly teach me that my life was bad, that by sin I deserved damnation, and that such was the greatness of my sin that I deserved no redemption. And this inward motion I received in St. Andrew's church, in the city of Norwich, at a lecture or sermon then preached by a godly learned man, whose doctrine, and the manner of whose teaching, I liked wonderful well; yea, in my conscience, such was his singleness of heart and zeal in his doctrine, that he might have converted the worst monster in the world. Well, at that time, whosoever was worst, I knew myself as bad as he, being new come from Italy, where I learned all the villanies under the heavens. At this sermon, the said learned man (who doubtless was the child of God) did beat down sin in such pithy and persuasive manner, that I began to call unto mind the danger of my soul, and the prejudice that at length would befall me for those gross sins which with greediness I daily committed; insomuch as sighing I said to myself, Lord have mercy upon me, and send me grace to amend and become a new man. But this good motion lasted not long in me; for no sooner had I met with my copesmates, but seeing me in such a solemn humour, they demanded the cause of my sadness; to whom when I had discoursed that I sorrowed for my wickedness of life, and that the preacher's words had taken a deep impression in my conscience, they fell upon me in jesting manner, calling me Puritan and precisian, and wished I might have a pulpit, with such other scoffing terms, that by their foolish persuasion the good and wholesome lesson I had learned went quite out of my remembrance; so that I fell again, with the dog, to my old vomit, and put my wicked life in practice, and that so thoroughly as ever I did before. Thus, although God sent his holy spirit to call me, and though I heard him, yet I regarded it no longer than the present time; when suddenly forsaking it, I went obstinately forward in my mess. Nevertheless, soon after I married a gentleman's daughter of good account, with whom I lived for a while; but forasmuch as she would persuade me from my wilful wickedness, after I had a

child by her, I cast her off, having spent up the marriage-money which I obtained by her. Then I left her at six-and-seven, who went into Lincolnshire, and I to London, where in short space I fell into favour with such as were of honourable and good calling. But here note, that though I knew how to make a friend, yet I had not the gift or reason how to keep a friend; for he that was my dearest friend, I would be sure so to behave myself towards him that he should ever after profess to be my utter enemy, or else vow never after to come in my company. Thus my misdemeanours (too many to be recited) caused the most part of those so much to despise me, that in the end I became friendless, except it were in a few alehouses, who commonly, for my inordinate expenses, would make much of me, until I were on the score far more than ever I meant to pay by twenty nobles thick. After I had wholly betaken me to the penning of plays (which was my continual exercise), I was so far from calling upon God, that I seldom thought on God, but took such delight in swearing and blaspheming the name of God, that none could think otherwise of me than that I was the child of perdition. These vanities, and other trifling pamphlets I penned of love and vain fantasies, were my chiefest stay of living; and for those my vain discourses I was beloved of the more vainer sort of people, who being my continual companions, came still to my lodging; and there would continue quaffing, carousing, and surfeiting with me all the day long."

In 1588 Greene took it into his head to augment his University honours; for we find him in July of that year incorporated of Oxford, perhaps with no other aim than that of being able to gratify his vanity in setting forth, in his subsequent publications, the double title of "Utriusque Academiæ in Artibus Magister." Whether he ever followed any profession does not distinctly appear. Mr. Gilchrist states, that in June 1584, having taken holy orders, he was presented to the vicarage of Tollesbury in Essex, which he resigned the next year; if so, conjecturally with a view to follow the medical profession, since in the title-page of his *Planetomachia*, in 1585, he styles himself Student in Physic. The "Robert Grene" who, in 1576, was one of the queen's chaplains, and presented by her majesty to the rectory of Walkington, in the diocese of York, must have been some other person, or possibly identical with the vicar of Tollesbury, and not with our reckless profligate. However this may be, it is quite certain that the latter days of Robert Greene—minister, mediciner, or merely miscellaneous writer—were wretched in the extreme, and that his end was utter misery. In the beginning of August 1592, having consumed to excess pickled herrings and Rhenish wine at a supper where Nash was a principal guest, he fell ill; and after lingering for

a month "in most woefull and pittiful estate, having laid all to gage for a few schillings, and pittifully begging a penny pott of Malmesie" (as Gabriel Harvey describes it), at his lodging in the house of a poor cordwainer near Dowgate, he died, on the 3d September. The "manner of the death and last end of Robert Greene, Maister of Arts," is thus given in the preface to the pamphlet called his *Repentance*. "After that he had penned the former discourse (then lying sore sick of a surfeit which he had taken with drinking), he continued most fervent and penitent; yea, he did with tears forsake the world, renounced swearing, and desired forgiveness of God and the world for all his offences; so that during all the time of his sickness (which was about a month's space) he was never heard to swear, rave, or blaspheme the name of God, as he was accustomed to do before that time, which greatly comforted his well-willers, to see how mightily the grace of God did work in him. During the whole time of his sickness he continually called upon God, and recited these sentences following:

" 'O Lord! forgive me my manifold offences.'

" 'O Lord! have mercy upon me.'

" 'O Lord! forgive me my secret sins, and in thy mercy, Lord, pardon them all.'

" 'Thy mercy, O Lord, is above thy works.'

"And with suchlike godly sentences he passed the time, even till he gave up the ghost. And this is to be noted, that his sickness did not so greatly weaken him, but that he walked to his chair and back again the nyght before he departed; and then, being feeble, laying him down on his bed, about nine of the clock at night, a friend of his told him that his wife had sent him commendations, and that she was in good health; whereat he greatly rejoiced, confessed that he had mightily wronged her, and wished that he might see her before he departed. Whereupon, feeling his time was but short, he took pen and ink and wrote her this letter:—"Sweet wife, as ever there was any good-will or friendship between thee and me, see this bearer, my host, satisfied of his debt. I owe him ten pound, and but for him I had perished in the streets. Forget and forgive my wrongs done unto thee, and almighty God have mercy on my soul. Farewell till we meet in heaven, for on earth thou shalt never see me more. This 2d September, 1592; written by thy dying husband, Robert Greene.'"

The 'well-willers' spoken of in this account did not include Greene's boon companions, "for," says Gabriel Harvey, "the wretched fellow could not get any of his old acquaintance to comfort or visit him in his extremity. The poor cordwainer's wife was his only nurse, and the mother of Infortunatus his sole companion, but

when Mistress Appleby came, as much to expostulate injuries with her as to visit him." This mother of Infortunatus (Infortunatus Greene, an illegitimate son of the poet) was the sister of one Bale, an infamous character about town; and Mistress Appleby appears to have been another mistress of the wretched man, who, on his death-bed, was harassed with the jealous wranglings of these women. Robert Greene was buried the day after his death, in the New Churchyard, near Bedlam; the cost of his winding-sheet four shillings, and of his funeral six shillings and fourpence, being defrayed by the charitable journeyman and his wife, to whom in life he had been so deeply indebted. His corpse was decked by his weeping hostess—who, says Harvey, loved him dearly—with a garland of bays, pursuant to his last request.

Although Greene only began to write in 1584, and died in 1592, he produced a series of works of all sorts and sizes, the number of which would seem incredible, were not the extraordinary readiness of his pen matter of notoriety. "In a day and a night," says Nash, much of whose *Strange Newes* is occupied with Greene and his sayings and doings, "would he have yarked up a pamphlet as well as in seven yeare; and glad (adds Nash) were that printer that might be so blessed to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit." Mr. Dyce, whose edition of Greene's writings constitutes not the least of his many and great claims to the earnest thanks of the intellectual world, fills eleven pages of his work with the mere titles of his author's productions, prose and poetical. They comprise :

1. The Mirrour of Modestie. 1584.
2. Morando, the Tretameron of Love. 1584.
3. Guidonius, the Card of Fancie. 1584.
4. Planetomachia, or the first part of the general opposition of the Seven Planets. 1585.
5. Translation of a Funeral Sermon by Pope Gregory XIII. 1585.
6. Menaphon; Camilla's Alarum to Slumbering Euphues, in his melancholy cell at Silexadra. 1589.
7. Euphues, his Censure to Philautus. 1587.
8. Perimedes, the Blacksmith.
9. Pandosto, the Triumph of Time, or the History of Dorastus and Faunia. 1589. Memorable as the novel on which Shakspeare founded the "Winter's Tale."
10. The Spanish Masquerado. 1589.
11. The Royal Exchange.
12. Greene's Never too late, or a Power of Experience. 1590.
13. Francesco's Fortunes, or the Second Part of Greene's "Never too late." 1590. Many of the adventures of the hero of this novel are supposed to have happened to Greene himself.
14. Greene's Mourning Garment, given him by Repentance at the Funerals of Love.

15. Greene's Farewell to Folly. 1591.
16. A Notable Discovery of Cozenage.
17. The Second and Last Part of Coney Catching. 1592.
18. The Third and Last Part of Coney Catching. 1592.
19. A Disputation between a He Coney Catcher and a She Coney Catcher. 1592.
20. Greene's Groat's Worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance. In this tale also the adventures of the hero, Roberto, are supposed to represent, with more or less exaggeration, those of the writer.
21. Cicerone's Amor ; Tully's Love. 1592.
22. A Quip for an Upstart Courtier ; or a quaint Dispute between Velvet-Breeches and Cloth-Breeches. 1592.
23. Philomela, the Lady Fitzwater's Nightingale.
24. The Black Book's Messenger, laying open the Life and Death of Ned Broune, one of the most notable Cutpurses, Cross-biters, and Coney Catchers that ever lived in England. 1592.
25. The Repentance of Robert Greene, Master of Arts, wherein by himself is laid open his loose Life; with the manner of his Death. 1592.
26. Mamillia, a Mirrour or Looking-Glass for the Ladies of England. 1593.
27. Mamillia, the Second Part of the Triumph of Pallas. 1593.
28. News both from Heaven and Hell.
29. Greene's Aphareon.
30. Penelope's Web, a Christal Mirror of Feminine Perfection.
31. Thieves Falling Out, True Men come by their Goods ; or the Bellman wanted a Clapper. A Peel of new Villanies rung out.
32. The History of Arbasto, King of Denmark.
33. Alcida, Greene's Metamorphosis.
34. A Pair of Turtle Doves ; or, the Tragical History of Bellora and Fidelio.
35. The History of Orlando Furioso. A Tragedy.
36. A Looking-Glass for London and England. A Mystery-Play.
37. The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. A Play.
38. The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Arragon. A Play.
39. The Scottish History of James the Fourth. A Play.
40. George à Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield. A Play.

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### THOMAS KYD.

(*Born circa 1560.*)

Thomas Kyd is the author of the noted play *The Spanish Tragedy*, which, immensely ridiculed by contemporary dramatists and other wits, was, at all events, so well thought of by the public as to go through more editions than perhaps any play of the time ; a success which must be largely attributed to the author's own merits, for it was not until after 1602 that the play was enriched by the supplemental scenes and speeches contributed by Ben Jonson, and with

regard to some of which Collier considers, that there is nothing in Ben's own entire plays at all equalling them in pathetic beauty. It is not known in what precise year the *Spanish Tragedy* was first acted; but "The first part of Jeronymo," of which it is the completion,—the title is, *The Spanish Tragedy; or, Jeronymo is Mad again*,—was acted in 1588. "Kyd," writes Collier, "was a poet of very considerable mind, and deserves, in some respects, to be ranked above more notorious contemporaries. His thoughts are often both new and natural; and if in his plays he dealt largely in blood and death, he only partook of the habit of the time, in which good sense and discretion were often outraged for the purpose of gratifying the crowd. In taste he is inferior to Peele, but in force and character he is his superior; and if Kyd's blank verse be not quite so smooth, it has decidedly more spirit, vigour, and variety. As a writer of blank verse, I am inclined, among the predecessors of Shakespeare, to give Kyd the next place to Marlowe." Besides *Jeronymo* and *The Spanish Tragedy*, Kyd was the translator of the *Cordelia* of Garnier (1594). We know nothing of Kyd's personal history.

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SAMUEL DANIEL.

(1562-1619.)

Samuel Daniel, the son of a music-master, was born near Taunton, in 1562. In 1579 he was admitted a commoner of Magdalen Hall, Oxford, where he continued about three years, and made considerable improvement in academical studies. He left the University, however, without taking a degree, and pursued the study of history and poetry under the patronage of the Earl of Pembroke's family. This he thankfully acknowledges in his *Defence of Rhyme*.

The first of his productions, at the age of twenty-three, was a translation of Paulo Giovio's discourse of rare inventions, both military and amorous, called *Imprese*. He afterwards became tutor to the Lady Anne Clifford; to whom, at the age of thirteen, he addressed a delicate admonitory epistle.

Among this lady's other munificent acts was a monument to the memory of our poet, on which she caused it to be engraven that she had been his pupil; a circumstance which she seems to have remembered with delight at the distance of more than half a century after his death.

At the death of Spenser, Daniel, according to Wood, was appointed poet-laureate to Queen Elizabeth; but Malone considers him only as a volunteer laureate, like Jonson, Dekker, and others, who

furnished the court with masks and pageants. In King James's reign he was made gentleman extraordinary, and afterwards one of the grooms of the privy chamber to the queen-consort, who took great delight in his conversation and writings.

He now rented a small house and garden in Old Street, St. Luke's, where he composed most of his dramatic pieces, and enjoyed the friendship of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Chapman, as well as of many persons of rank: but he appears to have been dissatisfied with the opinion entertained of his talents; and towards the end of his life retired to a farm he had at Beckington, near Philip's Norton, in Somersetshire; where, after some time devoted to study and contemplation, he died, Oct. 14, 1619.

Daniel is much praised by his contemporaries. Old Fuller writes of him: "He carried in his Christian and surname two holy prophets; his monitors so qualify his raptures, that he abhorred all profaneness. He was also a judicious historian—witness his lives of our English kings since the Conquest until Edward III., wherein he hath the happiness to reconcile brevity with clearness, quality of great distance in other authors. He was a servant in ordinary to Queen Anne, who allowed him a fair salary. As the tortoise burieth itself all the winter under the ground, so Mr. Daniel would lie hid in the garden-house in Old Street, nigh London, for some months together (the more retiredly to enjoy the company of the Muses), and then would appear in publick, to converse with his friends, whereof Dr. Cowell and Mr. Camden were principal.

"Some tax him to smack of the old cask, as resenting of the Romish religion; but they have a quicker palate than I, who can make any such discovery. In his old age he turned husbandman, and rented a farm in Wiltshire, nigh the Devises. I can give no account how he thrived thereupon. For though he was well versed in Virgil, his fellow-husbandman poet, yet there is more required to make a rich farmer than only to say his *Georgics* by heart: and I question whether his Italian will fit our English husbandry. Besides that, Mr. Daniel his fancy was too fine and sublimated to be wrought down to his private profit."

His works consist of: 1. *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1594); 2. *Various Sonnets to Delia*; 3. *Tragedy of Cleopatra* (1594); 4. *Of the Civil Wars between the Houses of Lancaster and York* (1604); 5. *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses, presented in a Mask* (1604); 6. *Panegyric congratulatory delivered to King James at Burleigh-Harrington in Rutlandshire* (1604); 7. *Epistles to various great Personages, in verse* (1601); 8. *Musophilus, containing a general defence of learning*; 9. *Tragedy of Philotas* (1611); 10. *Hymen's Triumph, a pastoral*

*tragi-comedy at the Nuptials of Lord Roxburgh* (1623); 11. *Musa, or a Defence of Rhime* (1611); 12. *The Epistle of Octavia to M. Antonius* (1611); 13. *The First Part of the History of England*, in three books (1613), reaching to the end of King Stephen, in prose; to which he afterwards added a second part, reaching to the end of King Edward (1618), continued to the end of King Richard III. by John Trussel; 14. *The Queen's Arcadia*, a pastoral tragi-comedy (1606); 15. *Funeral Poem, on the Death of the Earl of Devon* (1623).

Coleridge, in a letter to Charles Lamb (written on the fly-leaf of the latter poet's copy of Daniel's works), thus speaks of Daniel: "Dear Charles,—I think more highly, far more than you seemed to do (on Monday night, Feb. 9, 1808). The verse does not *leize* me; and all the while I am reading it I cannot but fancy a plain England-loving English country gentleman, with only some dozen books in his whole library, and at a time when a *Mercury* or *Intelligencer* was seen by him once in a month or two, making this his newspaper and political Bible at the same time, and reading it so often as to store his memory with its aphorisms. Conceive a good man of that kind, diffident and passive, yet *rather* inclined to Jacobitism, seeing the reasons of the revolutionary party, yet, by disposition and old principles, leaning, in quiet nods and sighs, at his own parlour-fire, to the hereditary right (and of these characters there must have been many), and then read this poem, assuming in your heart his character,—conceive how proud he would look, and what pleasure there would be, what unconscious, harmless, humble self-conceit, self-compliment in his gravity; how wise he would feel himself, yet, after all, how forbearing; how much calmed by that most calming reflection (when it is really the mind's own reflection),—Ay, it was just so in King Henry the Sixth's time. Always the same passions at work." And again:

"Second Letter (five hours after the first).

"Dear Charles,—You must read over these *Civil Wars* again. We both know what a *mood* is; and the genial mood will—it shall—come for my sober-minded Daniel. He was a tutor and a sort of steward in a noble family, in which form was religiously observed, and religion formally; and yet there was much warm blood and mighty muscle of substance in them that the moulding-irons did not disturb, though they stiffened the vital man in them. Daniel caught and recommunicated the spirit of the great Countess of Pembroke, the glory of the North; he formed her mind, and her mind inspired him. Gravely sober on all ordinary affairs, and not easily excited by



any, yet there is one on which his blood boils—whenever he speaks of English valour exerted against a foreign enemy. Do read over,—but some evening when I am quite comfortable at your fireside,—and, oh, when shall I ever be if I am not so there!—that is the last altar at the horns of which my old feelings hang; but, alas, listen and tremble—nonsense!—well, I will read to you and Mary the 205, 206, and 207 pages—above all, that 93\* stanza! What is there in description superior even in Shakespeare? only that Shakespeare would have given one of his *glows* to the first line, and flattered the mountain-top with his sovran eye, instead of that poor ‘a marvellous advantage of his years.’ But this, however, is Daniel, and he must not be read piecemeal;—even by leaving off and looking at a stanza by itself, I find the loss.

“S. T. COLERIDGE.”

## MICHAEL DRAYTON.

(Circa 1563-1631.)

Michael Drayton, of an ancient family, deriving its name from the town of Drayton, in Leicestershire, was born at Hartshill, Warwickshire, about the year 1563. His parents not being opulent, he was indebted to patronage for the benefits of education. His early discovery of talent, and sweetness of disposition and manners, recommended him to some person of distinction, whom he served in quality of page, and who bestowed what was needful for the cultivation of his mind.

In his youth he discovered a propensity to read poetry, and was anxious to know “what kind of creatures poets were.” To gratify this curiosity, the works of Virgil and other classics were put into his hands, which inspired him with a taste superior to his years. Sir Henry Godere, of Polsworth, is said to have maintained him for some time at Oxford; where, however, his name does not occur among the scholars of any college or hall. From his description of the Spanish invasion in 1568, it has been supposed he was an eye-witness of the defeat of the Armada, and held some commission in the army;

\* “And, in a different style, the 98th stanza, page 208. What an image in 107, page 211! Thousands even of educated men would become more sensible, fitter to be members of parliament, or ministers, by reading Daniel; and even those few who, *quoad intellectum*, only gain refreshment of notions already their own, must become better Englishmen. Oh, if it be not too late, write a kind note about him!”—S. T. COLERIDGE.

and this, however doubtful, is the only intimation we have of his having applied himself to any regular profession.

Besides Sir Henry Godere, he found a liberal patron and friend in Sir Walter Aston, of Tixhall, in Staffordshire, to whom he gratefully dedicates many of his poems; and Sir Henry, some time before his death, recommended him to the Countess of Bedford. By means of Sir Walter Aston and Sir Roger Aston, he is said to have been employed as a confidential agent in a correspondence between the young king of Scotland and Queen Elizabeth; but this part of his history rests on no very solid foundation. It is more certain that he rendered the services and homage of a poet to King James, being among the first who congratulated him on his accession to the British throne; and even condescended to praise his majesty's poetical talents in a sonnet, of which he was afterwards ashamed. His duty to his king, however, was so ill repaid, that he gave up all hopes of rising at court; and his fable of the *Owl*, published a year after the coronation, is supposed to glance at persons and incidents connected with his disappointment. He adverts to the same subject, but so obscurely as to convey no information, in the preface to his *Poly-olbion*. Nor from this time have we any account of his personal history; and can only conjecture, from certain hints in his dedications and prefaces, that although he obtained the additional patronage of Lord Buckurst, and retained the esteem and kind offices of many private friends, he rose to no situation of wealth or eminence, and did not always derive much advantage from his numerous publications. He died Dec. 23, 1631, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His monument, a tablet of blue marble, with a bust, and some lines by Ben Jonson, was erected at the expense of the Countess of Dorset, in the south aisle. Aubrey attributes the verses to Quarles. His writings are these:

The Harmonie of the Church, containing the spiritual Songs and holy Hymnes of godly Men, Patriarches, and Prophets, all sweetly sounding to the glory of the Highest. 1591.

Idea; the Shepherd's Garland, fashioned in nine Eglogs; and Rowland's Sacrifice to the Nine Muses. 1593.

Mortimeriados: the lamentable Civil Warres of Edward the Second and his Barons. 1596. Published afterwards under the title of the Barons' Wars.

England's Heroical Epistles. 1598.

A gratulatorie Poem to the Majestie of K. James. 1603.

The Owle. 1604.

Moses in a Map of his Miracles. 1604.

A Pœan triumphall, composed for the Society of Goldsmiths of London, on King James's entering the City. 1604.

Poems. 1605.

The Legend of Cromwell.

Poly-Olbion.

The Battle of Agincourt. 1627.

The Muses' Elysium. 1630.

Few men appear to have been more highly respected by his contemporaries; and there is reason to think that he associated on very familiar terms with Jonson, Shakespeare, Selden, and other men of eminence for literary character and personal worth. Meres informs us that Drayton, "among scholars, soldiers, poets, and all sorts of people, was helde for a man of virtuous disposition, honest conversation, and well-governed carriage; which," he adds, "is almost miraculous in the declining and corrupt times."

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

(1564-1616.)

William Shakespeare was descended from an old Warwickshire family, founded, as the name imports, by some soldier of repute, and numbering others in its course; for we read, in the grant of arms to our poet's father, that "his great-grandfather, for his faithful and

approved service to the late most prudent prince King Henry VII. of famous memory, was advanced and rewarded with lands and tenements, given to him in these parts of Warwickshire, where they have continued, by some descents, in good reputation and credit." There were Shakespeares of old in Ireland also. In the *Rotulorum Patentium et Clausorum Cancellariæ Hiberniæ Calendarium* is an entry which shows that Thomas Shakespeare was appointed a comptroller of customs in the port of Youghal, in Ireland, in the 51st year of Edward III. On his mother's side, Shakespeare could boast of still older descent; for the Ardens of Wilmcote, one of whom she was, dated back to the Conquest. The immediate position of these representatives of ancient lineages when the son was born, whose fame was destined to surpass in lustre all lineages whatsoever, was unaristocratic enough; for John Shakespeare at that time was settled in a shop at Stratford-on-Avon, where, as wool-stapler, malster, and timber-merchant, he sold, amongst other things, the produce of the farm at Snitterfield, near Stratford, which had come to him with his wife. In this capacity he maintained for a long time a highly-respectable position, fulfilling successively all the municipal dignities, from jurymen to high-bailiff, which official climax he attained in 1568. He had eight children, three of whom died when quite young. William, the eldest of the sons, was born 23d



SHAKESPEARE'S SCHOOL.

April, 1564, in Henley Street, Stratford. His education, whatever may have been its amount—a subject of infinite waste controversy—

was acquired at the free grammar-school in that town, which he entered in 1571, and quitted in 1578; his father, it is supposed, then requiring his services in the conduct of his business, which about that time, from some reason or other, fell into decay. William Shakespeare, however, did not long, if at all, remain engaged in his father's business, though what other occupation he entered upon does not exactly appear. Old Aubrey, who, with entire confidingness, received every thing that every body told him, informs us, almost in the same breath, that when Shakespeare was a boy, he exercised his father's trade "of a butcher" (characteristically adding, "and when he killed a calf, he would doe it in a high style, and make a speech"), and that "he was in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country." A third conjecture is, that he was employed in an attorney's office,—a theory which has been made to derive support from the many legal phrases that occur in his plays. Whatever his occupation at this time may have been, he himself appears to have considered its remuneration adequate to the maintenance of a family; hence we find him in 1582, being then eighteen years old, marrying Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a yeoman occupying a cottage,



SHAKESPEARE'S HOUSE AT STRATFORD.

which still remains, at Shottery, a village near Stratford. Of the three children, two girls and a boy, who were the result of this union, the daughters survived their illustrious parent.

Shakespeare lived at Stratford, somehow or other, several years after his marriage; and then, "being naturally addicted to poetry and

acting, he came up to London," as Aubrey sets forth; his migration being hastened by a scrape in which some deer-poaching frolic involved him. "He had," says Mr. Rowe, "by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company; and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him. And though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the persecution against him in that degree, that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London." His first employment there, according to the popular tradition, was that of horse-holder; the story whereof, derived from Sir Wm. Davenant, runs thus:

"Concerning Shakespeare's first appearance in the play-house, when he came to London, he was without money or friends, and being a stranger, he knew not to whom to apply, nor by what means to support himself. At that time, coaches not being in use, and as gentlemen were accustomed to ride to the play-house, Shakespeare, driven to the last extremity, went to the play-house door, and picked up a little money by taking care of gentlemen's horses who came to the play; he became eminent even in that profession, and was taken notice of for diligence and skill in it. He had soon more business than he himself could manage; and at last hired boys under him, who were known by the name of Shakespeare's boys. Some of the players accidentally conversing with him, found him so acute, and master of so fine a conversation, that, struck therewith, they introduced him to the house, in which he was first admitted in a very low station; but he did not long remain so, for he soon distinguished himself, if not as an extraordinary actor, at least as a fine writer."

Whether Shakespeare ever fulfilled this humble function is extremely problematical; at all events, he did not long remain outside the theatre, being received into the Blackfriars play-house by its manager, his countymen, Richard Burbage, in the capacity of servant or apprentice, the nature of which may be seen from the following memorandum in Henslowe's manuscript register, in which he states, that he "hired as a covenant servant William Kendall, for two years, after the statute of Winchester, with two single pence, and he to give him for his said services every week of his playing in London ten shillings, and in the country five shillings, for the which he covenanteth for the space of these two years to be ready at all

times to play in the house (theatre) of the said Philip, and in no other, during the said term."

The great poet was also, as we learn from various authorities, a good actor; and being moreover an excellent man of business, he did not long remain a servitor; for Mr. Collier has proved him, by means of the Ellesmere Papers, a sharer in the theatre,—that is, a person sharing in the daily profits of the representations,—as early as 1589. By 1592 he had become so well off as to excite the furious ire of his less fortunate contemporaries, one of whom, Henry Chettle, bespattered him, in a pamphlet, as "an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his tiger's heart, wrapt in a player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is, in his own conceit, the only Shake-scene in a country." It is due alike to Chettle and to Shakespeare to add that, in a subsequent pamphlet, the former thus withdraws these expressions: "The other, whom I did not at the time so much spare as since I wish I had; that I did not I am as sorry as if the original fault had been my fault, because myself have seen his demeanour, no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes. Besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty; and his facetious grace in writing, which approves his art." In 1593 appeared *Venus and Adonis*, which Shakespeare himself designates "the first heir of his invention;" meaning thereby, in all probability, his first production of weight. It was of very great importance to him in one material respect, for it procured for him a munificent donation from Lord Southampton, to whom the poem was dedicated. This gift—which Rowe exaggerates to 1000*l.*—was made, Davenant tells us, "in order to enable Shakespeare to go through with a purchase which Lord Southampton heard he had a mind to," and which Mr. Collier identifies with a share in the new playhouse, the *Globe*, then about to be erected. There is reason to believe that our practical poet became also at this time, or thereabouts, part-owner of the *Blackfriars* Theatre; and in one way or another he had, by 1597, realised enough wherewith to purchase out of his savings New Place, one of the best houses in Stratford, "with two barns and two gardens and their appurtenances." Here, when not in London, Shakespeare's family chiefly resided from 1597 to the time of his death; and Mr. Halliwell adduces, from the local records, various passages which exhibit Shakespeare himself as much there, and engaged, if not actually in agriculture, at least in negotiations of a kindred character. A subsidy-roll of 1598 shows him to have been the holder of a house in the parish of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate; and as there are no indications

that he ever lived in that locality, the probability is, that he had bought the lease of the premises as a speculation. The place was altogether out of the way of his occupation as actor, which he continued certainly up to 1603, in which year he was one of the principal performers in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*. It is probable that the year 1604 may be assigned as the period at which he finally retired from the stage as actor, though his connexion with it as owner and co-manager\* continued some years longer. Old Aubrey tells us that "he was wont to go to his native country once a year." It is likely that his journeys were more frequent; but whenever they occurred, we are informed by Anthony à Wood, he always lodged at the sign of the Crown, in the Corn-market, at Oxford,—a hostelry of which considerable portions still remain, and which at the time was kept by John Davenant, "a very grave and discreet citizen, who had to wife a very beautiful woman, and of a very good wit, and of conversation extremely agreeable." The son of this couple, Sir William Davenant, who was born March 1606, used, "when he was pleasant over a glass of wine with his most intimate friends, *e. g.* Sam Butler (author of *Hudibras*), &c., to say that it seemed to him that he wrote with the very spirit that Shakespeare wrote, and was contented enough to be thought his son." If there be no better basis for this *pleasantry* than the poet-laureate's conceit that he wrote like Shakespeare, the fair fame of Mrs. Davenant, and the morality of William Shakespeare, in the particular case, have been needlessly vindicated. Shakespeare permanently retired to Stratford about 1611, with an income exceeding 500*l.* a year, in those days a considerable revenue.

Our poet's sonnets were probably among his earliest productions; but when they were written, where, and to whom they were addressed, and of whom they discourse, are all matters of mystery. Mr. Halliwell conjectures several of them to have been composed at Stratford before his marriage, and to have been addressed to Anne Hathaway; and such may very well have been the case, compatibly with Mr. Dyce's opinion, "after repeated perusals of the sonnets, that the greater number of them were composed in an assumed character, on different subjects and at different times, for the amusement, and probably at the suggestion, of the author's intimate associates."

*Venus and Adonis*, as we have seen, was published in 1593. This was followed, in 1594, by *Lucrece*; and these two poems seem to have been petted much more than the plays, not only by contemporary

\* It was probably in the capacity of manager that he found occasion to bring Ben Jonson forward.



writers, but even by Shakespeare himself, since these were his only productions in the publication of which he at all concerned himself. The circumstance may, indeed, be attributable to the greater anxiety on such a subject of a young man just feeling his way to fortune; but it has more probable connexion with that utter indifference to fame which so singularly contrasts Shakespeare in this particular with Milton, and which occasioned him evidently to feel no concern whether his works were given to the world in a perfect or imperfect state. Even while in the enjoyment of his retirement at Stratford, he did not so much as take the trouble to collect his writings together; and it was not until seven years after his death that his plays were formed into a volume by two of his old associates. Milton, on the contrary, who was haunted from his youth upwards with the thought of composing some great work which should live for ages, when his *Paradise Lost* was published, blind as he was, and trifling as was the emolument it brought him, caused the printing to be superintended with the most minute care, and corrected the orthography throughout on a system peculiarly his own.

The order in which Shakespeare's plays were written will probably never be determined with precision. Meres, a contemporary writer, shows that in 1598, Shakespeare, then thirty-four years of age, had written, at all events, twelve plays :

1. The Two Gentlemen of Verona.
2. The Comedy of Errors.
3. Love's Labour's lost.
4. Love's Labour won (All's Well that Ends Well; or, according to Halliwell, a separate play now lost).
5. Midsummer Night's Dream.
6. Merchant of Venice.
7. Richard II.
8. Richard III.
9. Henry IV.
10. King John.
11. Titus Andronicus.
12. Romeo and Juliet.

It can be further stated that *Henry VI.*, Part I., had appeared before 1592; and that the first sketches of the Second and Third Parts of *Henry VI.* had appeared in 1593; that the *Merry Wives of Windsor* was written in 1593; and that the *Taming of the Shrew* was acted at Henslowe's Theatre in 1593. After 1598 we find :

Henry IV. Part II. Printed 1600; but believed by Halliwell to have been written before 1598.

Henry V. Printed 1600.

Much Ado about Nothing. Printed 1600.

*As You Like It.* Entered at Stationers' Hall, 1600.

*Twelfth Night.* Acted in Middle Temple Hall, 1602.

*Othello.* Acted at Harefield, July 1602; but probably affirmed by Mr. Halliwell to have been written before 1600.

*Hamlet.* Printed 1603.

*Measure for Measure.* Acted at Whitehall December 26, 1604.

*King Lear.* Acted at Whitehall 1607.

*Troilus and Cressida.* Acted at Court before 1609,

*Pericles.* Printed 1609.

*The Tempest.* Acted at Whitehall November 1, 1611.

*The Winter's Tale.* Acted at Whitehall November, 5, 1611.

*Henry VIII.* Acted 1613.

*Macbeth, Cymbeline, Timon of Athens, Julius Cæsar, Anthony and Cleopatra, and Coriolanus,* are evidently the productions of Shakespeare's mature period; but their precise dates are uncertain.

"The latter part of Shakespeare's life," writes Mr. Rowe, "was spent, as all men of good sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. His pleasurable wit and good-nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendship, of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Amongst them, it is a story almost still remembered in that country, that he had a particular intimacy with Mr. Combe, an old gentleman noted thereabouts for his wealth and usury. It happened that in a pleasant conversation, amongst their common friends, Mr. Combe told Shakespeare in a laughing manner, that he fancied he intended to write his epitaph, if he happened to outlive him; and since he could not know what might be said of him when he was dead, he desired it might be done immediately; upon which Shakspeare gave him these four lines:

Ten in the hundred lies here engraved,  
 'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not saved!  
 If any man ask, 'Who lies in this tomb?'  
 'Oh, oh!' quoth the devil, 'tis my John à Combe!"

But the sharpness of the satire is said to have stung the man so severely, that he never forgave it." Now these verses in themselves betray no asperity of feeling at all. Shakespeare's disposition, mild, gentle, and equable, seems to have even made him regard the failings of others, and even injuries done to himself, with forbearance; and in this particular instance the satire does not go beyond a jest, which certainly occasioned no lasting coolness, at all events, between the parties; for at his death, in 1614, Mr. Combe left Shakespeare *5*l.**; and Shakespeare, when he himself died, bequeathed his sword to Mr. Thomas Combe.

Shakespeare died at New Place, on April 23, 1616, aged fifty-two,

and was buried in the chancel of Stratford church two days afterwards. The memorial erected over his remains is a flat stone, bearing this inscription :

“ Good friend, for Jesus sake forbear  
To digg the dust enclo’ased heare :  
Blest be ye man yt. spares these stones,  
And curst be he yt. moves my bones.”

His monument, on the north wall of the chancel, is his bust, with a cushion before him, a pen in the right hand, and the left resting upon a scroll. Beneath are inscribed these lines :

“ Judicio Pylum, Genio Socratem, Arte Maronem,  
Terra Tegit, Populus Mæret, Olympus Habet.

Stay, passenger, why goest thou by so fast ?  
Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plast  
Within this monument : Shakespeare, with whome  
Quick Nature dide ; whose name doth deck ye. tombe  
Far more then cost ; sith all yt. he hath writt  
Leaves living Art but page to serve his witt.

Obiit Ano Do<sup>i</sup>. 1616.

Ætatis 53, die 23 Ap.”



SHAKESPEARE'S TOMB.

## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

(1564-1593.)

"Christopher Marlowe, a kind of second Shakespeare (whose contemporary he was), not only because he rose, like him, from an actor to be a *maker* of plays, though inferior both in fame and merit; but also because, in his begun poem of *Hero and Leander*, he seems to have a resemblance of that clear and unsophisticated wit which is natural to that incomparable poet."\* The poet thus heralded (conjecturally) by Milton was born at Canterbury, the son of a shoemaker there, in Feb. 1564. For his earlier education he was indebted to the King's School at Canterbury, whence, in 1581, he proceeded to Benet College, Cambridge,—whether as a Parker Scholar, or aided by the munificence of some local patron (Sir Roger Manwood, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, whose seat was at St. Stephen's, near Canterbury, is suggested by Mr. Dyce), does not clearly appear. Marlowe, however supported at college, took the degree of B.A. in 1583, and that of M.A. in 1587. It is assumed that his original destination was the church; and Mr. Dyce conceives that it may have been the sceptical opinions which afterwards rendered him so mournfully notorious, that, arising while he was yet at college, diverted him from the sacred function. As, however, he had produced *Tamburlaine the Great* before 1587, it is quite probable that an overpowering passion for the drama may have been the occasion of his abandoning the idea of the church as a profession. When he quitted the University, presumably in 1587, he is stated by Phillips and others to have commenced actor, "whence he rose to be a maker of plays;" and Warton figures him as "often applauded, both by Queen Elizabeth and by James I., as a judicious player." But Malone is of opinion that Marlowe was never an actor at all, grounding his opinion on the circumstance that he is not mentioned in that capacity by any of his contemporaries; and Mr. Dyce shows that, if ever an actor, our poet was such but for a brief period, and that after he had achieved eminence as a dramatist. A doggrel poem, written after his death, tells us that

"He had alsoe a player beene  
Upon the Curtaine stage;  
But brake his leg in one lewd scene,  
When in his early age."

The accident thus described to have befallen Marlowe at the Curtain Theatre may of itself account for his not having become

\* Phillips: *Theatrum Poetarum*.

more prominently and more permanently connected with the stage. However this may have been, we know that before 1587 Marlowe had become known in the dramatic world as the author of *Tamburlaine the Great*, the first play in which blank verse was ever used by our caterers for the stage. This tragedy, which was first printed (with considerable, and which appear very judicious curtailments of the acted drama) in 1590, the accomplished editor of Marlowe's works thus characterises: "With very little discrimination of character, with much extravagance of incident, with no pathos where pathos was to be expected, and with a profusion of inflated language, *Tamburlaine* is nevertheless a very impressive drama, and undoubtedly superior to all the English tragedies which preceded it:—superior to them in the effectiveness with which the events are brought out, in the poetic feeling which animates the whole, and the nerve and variety of the versification. Marlowe was yet to show that he could impart truthfulness to his scenes; but not a few passages might be gleaned from *Tamburlaine*, as grand in thought, as splendid in imagery, and as happy in expression, as any which his later works contain." In 1587, also, Marlowe is said to have produced a translation of Coluthus' *Rape of Helen*; but if so, the poem is lost. Next appeared (soon after *Tamburlaine*, though the exact date is not known) the *Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*, Marlowe's greatest work: it met at once with complete success, and was reprinted many times. Next (probably in 1590) appeared *The Jew of Malta*, which, however fine in its first two acts, is, Mr. Dyce conceives, "in the latter part so inferior in every respect, that we rise from a perusal of the whole with a feeling akin to disappointment." On the next production of Marlowe's muse, *Edward the Second*, Lamb thus writes, in relation to its two principal scenes: "The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in Edward furnished hints which Shakespeare scarce improved in his *Richard II.*; and the death-scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene, ancient or modern, with which I am acquainted." Marlowe's last play was the *Massacre at Paris*, produced by Henslowe's company 30th Jan. 1593. His premature death, a few months afterwards, extinguished mental powers which, had Marlowe lived to mature them, would have qualified him to take rank amongst the very foremost men of the age of Elizabeth. "The dramatists who preceded him," writes Mr. Dyce, "had no dominion over the passions; they were extravagant and bombastic, instead of being pathetic and natural. Peele and Greene, the friends and contemporaries of Marlowe, exhibited only slight and occasional indications of feeling in their dramatic compositions. Marlowe was the first who made any impression on the hearts of the audience. He possessed more

genius and refinement, and drew his materials from a purer source, than any former dramatic poet." We know little further of the personal history of Marlowe, than the heavy imputations to which his moral and religious character was subjected by contemporary and succeeding writers of a particular class, and the terrible catastrophe of his death, which, to the stern moralists who denounced him, seemed an immediate judgment from heaven upon his impiety. Thomas Beard, the noted Puritan, in his *Theatre of God's Judgments*, and William Vaughan, in his *Golden Grove*, distinctly charge it upon Marlowe, that "he fell (not without just desert) to that great outrage and extremity, that he denied God and his Son Christ, and not only in word blasphemed the Trinity, but also (as is credibly reported) wrote books against it;" and a passage in Robert Greene's *Groats-worth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance* is considered as confirming the imputation that, at all events, Marlowe had doubts on the subject of religion. There can be no question that the circumstances of his death were as discreditable as they were deplorable, and manifest a manner of life far remote from the moral. He was carousing with "some loose-legged Lais," in a tavern at Deptford, on 1st June, 1593, when Francis Archer, a serving-man, "a rival of his lewd love," entered the room. An affray ensued, in which Archer, having by superior agility gained an opportunity of strongly grasping Marlowe's wrist, plunged the poet's dagger, raised to strike his adversary, into his own eye, "in such sort that his brains coming out at the dagger's point, he shortly after died." This most striking scene is the subject of a masterly dramatic sketch by one of our finest living poets—Richard Henry Horne.

Besides the tragedies already mentioned, another play that passes under his name, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, though commenced by him, was completed and published by Thomas Nash. Marlowe is also said to have joined Day in the comedy of *The Maiden's Holiday*, which was one of the manuscripts burned by Warburton's servant. *Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen*, though originally printed with Marlowe's name to it, is by Mr. Collier identified with *The Spanesche More's Tragedy*, written by Dekker, Houghton, and Day. Marlowe at his death left incomplete a translation of *The Loves of Hero and Leander*, the eloquent production of an unknown sophist of Alexandria, but commonly ascribed to the ancient Musæus. This palm was published in 1598; and Malone conceives that had Marlowe lived to finish it, he might perhaps have contested the palm with Shakespeare in his *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. Our poet's translation of *The Elegies of Ovid* was first printed at Middleburgh, without date: an

edition was printed in England in 1596; a later impression—there were five or six—was burned at Stationers' Hall, in 1599, by command of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, as reproducing all the obscenity of the original, in language scarcely less elegant, but at the same time scarcely less disguised. The fine song, "Come live with me, and be my love," so finely answered by Raleigh, was written by Marlowe. Our poet also translated the first book of Lucan. "His translation," says Mr. Dyce, "is curious, as exhibiting one of the earliest specimens of the use, except in dramatic composition, of English blank verse; but the versification is by no means distinguished by the same polish and facility as that of his plays." Marlowe, as has been mentioned, translated Coluthus' *Rape of Helen*; and from the fragments printed in Mr. Dyce's second volume, he was probably the author of other pieces which are now lost to us. This notice of "that elemental wit, Kit Marlowe"—and this familiar appellative, as Mr. Dyce remarks, may be considered as evidence of a kind disposition or a companionable nature in him on whom his friends bestowed it,—cannot be better concluded than with the fine strains of Drayton :

"Next Marlowe, bathed in the Thespian springs,  
Had in him those brave translunary things  
That your first poets had; his raptures were  
All air and fire, which made his verses clear;  
For that fine madness still he did retain,  
Which rightly should possess a poet's brain."

### THOMAS NASH.

(1564-1600.)

"And thou, into whose soul, if ever there were a Pythagorean metempsychosis, the raptures of that fiery and inconfined Italian spirit were bounteously and boundlessly infused, then some time secretary to Pierce Penniless, and master of his requests,—ingenious, ingenuous, fluent, facetious T. Nash; from whose abundant pen honey flowed to thy friends, and mortal aconite to thy enemies; thou that made the Doctor (Harvey) a flat dunce, and beat him at two sundry tall weapons—poetry and oratory, sharpest satire; lucculent poet, elegant orator, get leave for thy ghost to come from her abiding, and to dwell with me awhile!" So apostrophises Thomas Dekker; and we could almost desire the presence of the same ghost, so that we might learn more of Tom Nash in the flesh. He appears to

have been descended from a family in Herefordshire, and to have been born at Lowestoft, in Suffolk, about 1564. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, where, in 1584, he became B.A. His progress to M.A. was abruptly closed by his expulsion, in 1584, for having, in conjunction with Gabriel Harvey (who was also expelled for the same offence), written a piece called *Terminus et non Terminus*, which the collegiate authorities took in dudgeon. What became of him immediately after he quitted college does not appear; but, between 1584 and 1587, he, somehow or other, contrived to travel about, especially in Ireland and in Italy, with the literature of which latter country he shows himself well acquainted. In his *An Almond for a Parrot* (1589) he gives an account of a circumstance that had occurred to him "last summer, at Bergamo, on his way homeward from Venice." He commenced professional author in London, in 1589, as the assailant of Martin Mar-Prelate (John Penry), whom he mauled in his *Counter Cuff to Martin Junior*, with infinite force and effect, bringing wit and satire to bear to far more purpose than the lumbering weapons of scholastic controversy which had been previously used in the fight.

As a dramatist, the only work of his unassisted pen (with an exception to be presently stated) is *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, a show rather than a play, which was represented before Queen Elizabeth in the autumn of 1592. He had previously, in 1590, assisted Marlowe in the composition of the tragedy of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. The only other play which he produced was a satirical piece, entitled *The Isle of Dogs* (the Isle of Dogs was at that time a sort of Alsatia), which gave such offence to the government, that the play was prohibited, and the author committed for some time to the Fleet prison; as we find from the diary of skin-flint Henslowe, the manager. Nash was one of the choice wits and boon companions of his day. If he originally possessed any patrimony, it was soon consumed in the dissipations of a town life; and he was reduced to dependence on literary patronage and the produce of his pen. That the latter was fertile enough must be allowed; but its fruits were not sufficient to supply his wants. He commences his *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Devil* with a very touching description of his situation: "Having," says he, "spent many years in studying how to live, and lived a long time without money; having tired my youth with folly, and surfeited my mind with vanity,—I began at length to look back to repentance, and addressed my endeavours to prosperity; but all in vain. I sat up late and rose early, contended with the cold and conversed with scarcity; for all my labours turned to loss: my vulgar muse was despised and neglected; my pains not regarded,



or slightly rewarded ; and I myself, in prime of my best wit, laid open to poverty."

From the following passage, it is not impossible that he had experienced the bounty of Sir Philip Sidney: "Gentle Sir Philip Sidney, thou knewest what pains, what toils, what travail conduct to perfection; well couldst thou give every virtue his encouragement, every art his due, every writer his desert, 'cause none more virtuous, witty, or learned than thyself.' But thou art dead in thy grave, and hast left too few successors of thy glory; too few to cherish the sons of the Muses, or water those budding hopes with their plenty, which thy bounty erst planted."

Nash appears to have been very much in need of a patron about this time; in the production just quoted he holds out flattering promises of what he would do if any Mæcenas would extend his bounty to him: "Gentles," says he, "it is not your lay chronigraphers, that write of nothing but mayors and sheriffs, and the Dear Year, and the Great Frost, that can endow your names with never-dated glory, for they want the wings of choice words to fly to heaven, which we have; they cannot sweeten a discourse, or wrest admiration from mere reading, as we can, reporting the meanest accident. Poetry is the honey of all flowers, the quintessence of all sciences, the marrow of all wits, and the very phrase of angels: how much better is it, then, to have an eloquent lawyer to plead one's case than a strutting townsman, who loseth himself in his tale, and doth nothing but make legs; so much it is better for a nobleman or gentleman to have his honour's story related and his deeds emblazoned by a poet than a citizen. . . . For my part, I do challenge no praise of learning to myself, yet have I worn a gown in the University; but this I dare presume, that if any Mæcenas bind me to him by his bounty, or extend some sound liberality to me worth the speaking of, I will do him as much honour as any poet of my beardless years shall in England. Not that I am so confident what I can do, but that I attribute so much to my thankful mind above others, which would enable me, I am persuaded, to work miracles. On the contrary side, if I be evil entreated, or sent away with a flea in mine ear, let him look that I'll rail on him soundly, not for an hour or a day, while the injury is fresh in my memory, but in some elaborate polished poem, which I will leave to the world when I am dead, to be a living image to all ages of his beggarly parsimony and ignorant illiberality: and let him not (whatsoever he be) treasure the weight of my words by this book, where I write *quicquid in buccam veniret*, as fast as my hand can trot; but I have terms (if I be vext), laid in steep in aquafortis and gunpowder, that shall rattle through the

skies and make an earthquake in a peasant ears. Put case (since I am not yet out of the theme of wrath), that some tired jade belonging to the press, whom I never wronged in my life, hath named me expressly in print (as I will not do him), and accused me of want of learning, upbraiding me for reviving in an epistle of mine the reverend memory of Sir Thomas More, Sir John Cheke, Doctor Watson, Doctor Haddon, Doctor Carr, Master Ascham, as if they were no meat but for his mastership's mouth, but some such as the son of a rope-maker were worthy to mention them. To show how I can rail, thus I would begin to rail on him: Thou that hadst thy hood turned over thy ears when thou wert a Batchelor, for abusing of Aristotle, and setting him upon the school-gates, painted with ass's ears on his head,—is it any discredit for you, thou great baboon, thou pigmy braggart, thou pamphleter of nothing but peans, to be censured by thee, that has scorned the prince of philosophers,—thou that in thy dialogues sold'st honey for a halfpenny, and the choicest writers extant for cues a piece? Thou cam'st to the logic-schools when thou wert a fresh man, and writ'st phrases: off with thy gown and untruss, for I mean to lash thee mightily."

And so he goes on in a strain of vituperation and invective, of which few writers can furnish an example. This was the commencement of those bitter conflicts between Nash and Gabriel Harvey with which the town was amused, and which at length attained such a pitch of violence and animosity, that the Archbishop of Canterbury issued an order, "that all Nash's books and Harvey's books be taken wheresoever may be found, and that none of the said books be ever printed hereafter." These books have, in consequence, become exceedingly rare. In the literary combat, Nash, with his fluent wit, his light and airy evolutions, and his caustic invective, had decidedly the advantage over the unwieldy pedantry, the clumsy but bitter abuse, and cynical hatred of Harvey, and almost literally performed his boast, that if you "look on his head, you shall find a grey hair for every line I have writ against him;" and he adds, "and you shall have all his beard white too by the time he hath read over this book." Before his death, however, Nash, if we are to believe his dedication of *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, addressed to Lady Elizabeth Carey, grew weary of this employment. "A hundred unfortunate farewells," says he, "to fantastical satyrysm, in whose veins heretofore I misspent my spirit, and prodigally conspired against good hours. Nothing is there now so much in my vows as to be at peace with all men, and make submissive amends where I have most displeased."

This piquant satirist died, it is supposed, in 1600 or 1601. He is spoken of as dead in *The Return from Parnassus*, which is supposed.

to have been written in 1602, and was acted in 1606. Nash enjoyed a great reputation amongst the wits of his time. Dr. Lodge calls him "the true English Aretine." Drayton says of him :

" And surely Nash, tho' he a prosier were,  
A branch of laurel yet deserves to bear :  
Sharply satiric he was ; and that way  
He went, since that his being to this day,  
Few have attempted ; and I surely think  
Those words shall hardly be set down in ink,  
Shall scorch and blast so as his could, when he  
Would inflict vengeance."

And in the play of *The Return from Parnassus* he is characterised as "a fellow that carried the deadly stock\* in his pen, whose muse was armed with a gag-tooth, and his pen possessed with Hercules' furies;" which is succeeded by the following lines :

" Let all his faults sleep with his mournful chest,  
And then for ever with his ashes rest ;  
His style was witty, though he had some gall ;  
Something he might have mended,—so may all ;  
Yet this I say, that, for a mother wit,  
Few men have ever seen the like of it."

His dramatic productions consist of *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, a comedy (1600) ; *The Isle of Dogs*, never printed ; and *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, a tragedy (1594), in which he was assisted by Marlowe.

Nash does not appear, from the specimens he has left us, to have possessed much dramatic talent : his *Summer's Last Will and Testament* is more closely allied to satire than the drama, partaking more of invective than of passion ; and *Dido*, of which he probably wrote the greater part, is little more than a narrative taken from Virgil, constructed according to the form of a drama, but containing little of the essence of that species of composition. The other works by Nash are : *Return of the Renowned Cavaliero Pasquile of England* (1589) ; *Strange News of the Intercepting certaine Letters* (1592), another fling at Harvey : *Martin's Month's Mind* (1589) ; *Pasquil's Apology* (1590) ; *The Terrors of the Night, or a Discourse of Apparitions* (1594), first identified by Collier ; &c.

\* Stocca, a long rapier.

## THOMAS MIDDLETON.

(Circa 1570-1627.)

Thomas Middleton, the son of William Middleton or Midleton, a gentleman entitled to bear arms, was born in London in or about the year 1570. He was admitted of Gray's Inn in 1593. His first appearance in print appears to have been in 1597, when *The Wisdom of Solomon paraphrased*, written by Thomas Middleton, was published. In 1599 was produced *Microcynicon, six snarling Satires*, which has been attributed to Middleton, and admitted by Mr. Dyce into his valuable edition of this poet. In the same year appeared his first dramatic production, *The Old Law*, written in conjunction with William Rowley, and afterwards revised by Massinger. In May 1602 was acted *The Two Harpies*, a play written by Dekker, Drayton, Middleton, Webster, and Munday in conjunction; and, in the same year, *Randall, Earl of Chester*, or, as it is elsewhere in Henslowe's diary called, *The Chester Tragedy*, a play written by Middleton without assistance. Another play of his, *The Puritan Maid, the Modest Wife, and the Wanton Widow*, may also have been written about this time; but the manuscript of it was unluckily one of those destroyed by Warburton's servant, "burned or put under pye-bottoms!" Under 1604 Mr. Dyce identifies with our poet two tracts, respectively entitled *The Black Book*, and *Father Hubbard's Tales, or the Ant and the Nightingale*, "coarse but humorous attacks on the vices and follies of the times, and peculiarly interesting on account of the passages which relate to Thomas Nash, and of whose admirable prose satires they may be considered as no unhappy imitations." In January 1613 Middleton was employed by the corporation of London to write a mask, *The Mask of Cupid*, on the occasion of the "solemnities" at Merchant Taylors' Hall, celebrated in honour of the marriage of the infamous Earl and Countess of Somerset. He devised similar shows for the civic authorities in 1616, 1617, and 1619, and gave such satisfaction, that in the latter year (probably) he was appointed "chronologer to the city of London, and inventor of its honourable entertainments," at the yearly fee of 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, increased in 1620, on the poet's petition, to 10*l.* per annum, in 1622 to 15*l.*, and then to 20*l.*, other advantages being, from time to time, annexed to the office by the liberal citizens. To proceed, however, with the enumeration of those productions which have really entitled Middleton to his place among the poets:

The Mayor of Queenborough, a Comedy, is ranged by Mr. Dyce quite among his earliest productions, anterior even to his *Burt, Master Constable*; or the *Spaniard's Night Walke* (a comedy), which was printed in 1602. Then came:

- The Phoenix. Tragedy. 1607.  
 Michaelmas Term. Comedy. 1607.  
 A Trick to catch the Old One. Comedy.  
 The Family of Love. Comedy. 1608.  
 Your Five Gallants. Comedy.  
 A Mad World, my Masters. Comedy.  
 The Roaring Girl; or Moll Cutpurse. Comedy. Partly written by Dekker.  
 The Honest Whore. Tragedy.  
 The Second Part of the Honest Whore. Tragedy. Both chiefly written by Dekker.  
 The Widow.  
 A Fair Quarrel. Comedy.  
 A Chaste Maid in Cheapside. Comedy.  
 The Spanish Gipsy.  
 A Game at Chess.  
 Any thing for a Quiet Life.  
 Women beware Women. Tragedy.  
 No Wit, no Help like a Woman's. Comedy.  
 The Inner Temple Masque.  
 The Changeling. Tragedy. Partly written by Rowley.  
 The Witch. Tragedy. Printed in 1778 from a rare manuscript.  
 The Game at Chess (which was produced in 1694) was, after running nine nights with great success, prohibited, on the complaint of the Spanish ambassador, as being "a very scandalous comedy, acted publicly by the king's players, wherein they take the boldness and presumption, in a rude and dishonourable fashion, to represent on the stage the persons of his Majesty the King of Spain, the Conde de Gondamar," &c. &c. The author was threatened with imprisonment, as well as his play with being "antiquated and silenced."
- A writer in the *Retrospective Review* classes Middleton with Webster and Ford; but Mr. Dyce, who deems these poets of a higher order, ranges him rather with Dekker, Heywood, Marston, Chapman, and Rowley.
- Thomas Middleton died at Newington Butts, in July 1627, and was buried in the parish church. His widow, Margaret, whom he left so poor that she had to seek the pecuniary aid of the corporation, which was at once granted, died in July 1628.

### THOMAS DEKKER.

(Born circa 1570.)

Thomas Decker, Deckar, Dekker, or Dekkar, as the name is differently spelt in his different publications, flourished in the reign of King James I. The exact periods of his birth and decease are not ascertained; but he could not have died young, as his earliest play bears date 1600, and his latest 1637. Mr. Oldys thinks that he certainly was living in 1638, and that he was in the King's-bench prison

from 1613 to 1616, or longer. A late writer, who gives some notice respecting him, observes, that he was probably more advanced in years than Mr. Oldys imagined, from a passage in the dedication to his *Match me in London* (1631), where he says, "I have been a priest in Apollo's temple many years; my voice is decaying with my age." It is supposed he had acquired reputation even in the time of Queen Elizabeth, whose decease and funeral he commemorates in his *Wonderful Year* (1603). He was contemporary with Ben Jonson; and his quarrel with that celebrated writer is perhaps the most prominent feature of his life. Jonson lashes him, as Crispinus, in his *Poetaster*; and Dekker amply repays him in his *Satiromastix*, under the title of Young Horace. He was much esteemed by the poets; Richard Browne was accustomed to call him father. William Winstanley says, he was "a high-flier in wit, a great pains-taker in the dramatic strain, and as highly conceited of those pains he took." Dekker's theatrical productions, arranged according to their respective dates, are the following, of which such as are marked with an asterisk were never published, and are supposed not to be now in existence:

\*Phaeton. Play. Acted 1597.

\*Orestes Furius. Play. Acted 1598.

\*Triplicity of Cuckolds. Play. Acted 1598.

\*Bear a Brain. Play. Acted 1599.

\*Gentle Craft. Play. Acted 1599.

\*Truth's Supplication to Candle-light. Play. Acted 1599.

Old Fortunatus. Comedy. 1600.

Satiromastix, or the Untrussing of the Humorous Poet. 1602.

\*Christmas comes but once a Year. Acted 1602.

\*Medicine for a Curst Wife. Play. Acted 1602.

Honest Whore, with the Humours of the Patient Man and the Longing Wife. Comedy. Acted 1602, under the title of the "Converted Courtesan." 1604. Thomas Middleton assisted in this piece.

Westward Hoe. Comedy. 1607.

Northward Hoe. Comedy. 1607.

Wyat's History. 1607.

(In these three last Dekker had the assistance of John Webster.)

Whore of Babylon. History. 1607.

Roaring Girl. Comedy. 1611. (Written in conjunction with Thomas Middleton.)

If it be not good, the Devil's in it. Play. 1612.

\*Guy of Warwick. Play. Jan. 15, 1619. (It was written in conjunction with John Day.)

Virgin Martyr. Tragedy. 1622. (Dekker did but assist Philip Massinger in writing this play.)

Second Part of the Honest Whore; with the Humours of the Patient Man and the Impatient Wife, &c. Comedy. 1630.

Match me in London. Tragi-comedy. 1631.

**Spanish Soldier.** Tragedy. May 16, 1631.

**Jew of Venice.** Sept. 9, 1653.

**Sun's Darling.** Masque. 1656. (Dekker joined with John Ford in writing this piece.)

**Witch of Edmonton.** Tragi-comedy. 1658. (Written likewise in conjunction with John Ford and William Rowley; but it was not published, nor was the preceding masque, till after the death of the authors.)

**\*Gustavus King of Swithland.** June 29, 1660.

**Tale of Jocondo and Astolfo.** June 29, 1660.

These two last were once in possession of Mr. Warburton, and destroyed in the fatal fire by his servant.

The four following plays have been attributed to Dekker and Webster jointly, but without foundation :

**Weakest goes to the Wall.** Tragi-comedy. 1600.

**Woman will have her Will.** August 1601.

**New Trick to cheat the Devil.** Comedy. 1639. By Robert Davenport.

**Noble Stranger.** Comedy. 1649. By Lewis Sharpe.

Of Dekker's tracts we have :

**The Wonderful Year,** wherein is showed London being sick of the Plague. 1603.

**Batchelor's Banquet,** wherein is prepared sundry Dainty Dishes, &c. pleasantly discoursing the variable Humours of Women, &c. 1603.

**Magnificent Entertainment given to King James, Queen Anne his Wife, and Henry Frederick Prince of Wales,** with the Speeches and Songs in the Pageants. 1604.

**Seven deadly Sins of London.** 1606.

**News from Hell,** brought by the Devil's Carrier. 1606.

**A Knight's Conjuring done in Earnest,** discovered in Jest. 1607.

**Jests to make you Merrier,** with some other things of like nature, &c. 1607.

**Dead Term ; or Westminster's Complaint for Long Vacations and Short Terms ;** by way of Dialogue between London and Westminster. 1608.

**Work for Armourers ; or the Peace is broken.** Open Wars likely to happen this Year. 1609.

**Raven's Almanack.** 1609.

**Gull's Horn-Book.** 1609.

**O per se O ; or, a new Crier of Lanthorn and Candlelights.** 1612.

**Lanthorn and Candlelight ; or the Bellman's Second Night's Walk,** and a new Canting Song : with Portrait. 1612.

**London Triumphant ; or, the Solemn and Magnificent Reception of Sir John Swinerton into London,** after his taking the Oath of Majoralty at Westminster. A Pageant. 1612.

**A strange Horse Race,** with the Catchtrolls Masque, and the Bankrupt's Banquet. 1613.

**Villanies discovered by Lanthorn and Candlelight,** and the help of a new Crier, called "O per se O." Being an Addition to the Bellman's Second Night Walk, with Canting Songs never before printed. 1616.

**Artillery Garden.** A Poem. 1616.

Decker his Dream. 1620.

Grievous Groans for the Poor. Done by a Well-wisher, who wisheth that the Poor of England might be so provided for as none should need to go a begging within this Realm. 1622.

Rod for Runaways, with the Runaway's Answer. 1625.

Thomas of Reading; or the Six worthy Yeomen of the West.

Bellman's Night Walker; whereunto is added, O per se O, and Canting Dictionary. 1637.

English Villanies Seven several Times prest to Death by the Printers; but, still reviving again, are now the Eighth Time (as at the first) discovered by Lanthorn and Candlelight, and the Help of a new crier called O per se O. 1638.

Bellman of London, bringing to light the most notorious Villanies that are now practised in the Kingdom.

To this list of Dekker's miscellaneous pamphlets, Mr. Rimbault, in his preface to *The Knight's Conjuring*, adds: 1. *The Double P. P., a Papist in arms, bearing ten several shields, encountered by the Protestant at ten several weapons, a Jesuit marching before them* (1606); and 2. A poem entitled *Warres, Warres, Warres, Arma Virumque cano*:

"Into the field I bring  
Souldiers and battailes,  
Boeth their fames I sing." 1628.

The pamphlets and the plays of Dekker abound with interesting local allusions, admirable sketches of character, and satirical hits at prevailing fashions. They alone would furnish a more complete view of the habits and customs of his contemporaries than could easily be collected from all the grave annals of the time.

### THOMAS GREEN.

(Born circa 1570.)

Thomas Green, a poet as well as an eminent actor in the age of Elizabeth, is supposed to have been a relation of Shakespeare. He seems to have been, at all events, born at Stratford-upon-Avon, from the following lines spoken by him in one of the old comedies, in the character of a clown:

"I pratted poesie in my nurse's arms,  
And born where late our Swan of Avon sung;  
In Avon's streams we both of us have lav'd,  
And both came out together."

This passage is quoted by Chetwood from the *Two Maids of Moor-clack*, where, however, it is not to be found; but it seems a genuine



extract from some old play. Heywood, who published *Green's Tu Quoque*, a play which took its designation from Green's existence as an actor, says in the preface, "As for Maister Greene, all that I will speake of him (and that without flattery) is this: there was not an actor of his nature in his time, of better ability in performance of what he undertooke, more applauded by the audience, of greater grace at the court, or of more general love in the city." It would hence appear, the play having been published in 1614, that Greene was at that time dead. From one of the epitaphs upon him in *Braithwayt's Remains* (1618), it appears that, when he died, he had recently landed from some voyage :

"Hee whom this mouldered clod of earth doth hide,  
New come from sea, made but one face and dide."

Green was the author of "*A Poet's Vision and a Prince's Glorie*, dedicated to the High and Mightie Prince James, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland" (1603); and of some verses prefixed to Drayton's poem on the Barons' Wars.

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### THOMAS HEYWOOD.

(Born circa 1570.)

If we were to estimate man's life by the number and extent of his works, we should say that Thomas Heywood was not gathered to his fathers until he had arrived at a ripe old age; but whether, according to the ordinary mode of calculating human existence, he lived to any great length of days, the few materials within our reach do not enable us to assert. The time of his birth and death are alike unknown: the place of the former may be collected from his works; but as to the last, we are unable to trace him to his grave. We learn, from *A Funeral Elegy on the Death of Sir George Saint-Poole, of Lincolnshire, my countryman*, that he was a native of Lincolnshire; and from the dedication of Cartwright's edition of his *Apology for Actors*, that he was a fellow of Peter House, Cambridge. Heywood himself, in the work just referred to, speaks of "the time of his residence" in that University. From the manner in which he alludes to his family, it may be inferred that it held a respectable rank in society: in the dedication of *The English Traveller*, addressed to Sir Henry Appleton, he speaks to that gentleman of "the alternate love and those frequent courtesies which interchangeably passed between

yourself and that good old gentleman mine uncle, Master Edmund Heywood, whom you please to grace by the title of father ;” and in the same place he alludes to “my countryman, Sir William Elvish, whom, for his unmerited love, many ways extended to me, I much honour.”

From the following memorandum in Henslowe’s diary, we find that Heywood had written for the stage as early as 1596 : “October 14, 1596 : Lent unto them (the Lord Admiral’s servants), for Hawode’s book, xxx’;” and that in 1598 he was a “hireling,”—by which name all the players who were not sharers were denominated. The memorandum of hiring is in these words, the spelling only being altered : “Memorandum.—That this 25th March, 1598, Thomas Heywood\* came and hired himself with me as a covenanted servant for two years, by the receiving of two single pennies, according to the statute of Winchester, and to begin at the day above written, and not to play any where public about London, not while these two years be expired, but in my (play)house. If he do, then he doth forfeit unto me, by the receiving of the two pence, forty pounds ; and witness, Anthony Munday,” &c.

From the same authority we learn that, in December in this year, he wrote a piece called *War without Blows, and Love without Suit* ; and in the February following another, entitled *Joan as good as my Lady*. This agrees with what Heywood says in the dedication prefixed to the *Four Prentices of London*, which was published in 1615, that it was “written many years since, in my infancy of judgment in this kind of poetry, and my first practice, . . . some fifteen or sixteen years ago.” Heywood had more “traffic with the stage” than any of his contemporaries, and, indeed, than any man who ever lived, if we except the Spanish playwright Lope de Vega. In the preface to his *English Traveller*, he says that this comedy is “one amongst two hundred and twenty, in which I have had either an entire hand, or at least a main finger.” To give variety to such a numerous offspring, he had recourse, as he informs us in the prologue to the *Royal King and Loyal Subject*, to all possible sources of information :

“To give content to this most curious age,  
The gods themselves we’ve brought down to the stage,  
And figur’d them in planets ; made even hell  
Deliver up the furies, by no spell  
Saving the Muse’s rapture. Further, we  
Have traffick’d by their help ; no history

\* The old curmudgeon, who never spelt any one’s name right, writes it Hawode,

We have left unrifed ; our pens have been dipt  
 As well in opening each hid manuscript  
 As tracks more vulgar, whether read or sung  
 In our domestic or more foreign tongue.  
 Of fairy elves, nymphs of the sea and land,  
 The lawns, the groves, no number can be scann'd  
 Which we have not given feet to ; nay, 'tis known  
 That when our chronicles have barren grown  
 Of story, we have all invention stretch'd,  
 Div'd low as to the centre, and then reach'd  
 Unto the *primum mobile* above,  
 Nor scap'd things intermediate."

Of these great number of plays no more than twenty-two have come down to us. The author himself accounts for this circumstance in various parts of his works. "My pen," says he in the *Apology*, "hath seldom appeared in press till now ; I have ever been too jealous of mine own weakness willingly to thrust into the press ; nor had I at this time, but that a kind of necessity enjoined me to so sudden a business." "It hath been no custom in me," he writes in his preface to the *Rape of Lucrece*, "of all other men, to commit my plays to the press. The reason, though some may attribute to my own insufficiency, I had rather subscribe in that to their severe censure, than, by seeking to avoid the imputation of weakness, to incur greater suspicion of honesty ; for though some have used a double sale of their labours, first to the stage, and after to the press, for my own part, I here proclaim myself ever faithful to the first, and never guilty of the last."

Besides plays, Heywood wrote :

The City Pageants for several years.  
 A Translation of Sallust. 1609.  
 Great Britain's Troy. 1609.  
 An Apology for Actors. 1612.  
 The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels. 1635.  
 Pleasant Dialogues and Dramas. 1637.  
 The Exemplary Lives and Acts of nine Women Worthies. 1640.  
 The Life of Merlin. 1640.  
 The General History of Women ; and several smaller pieces.

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### BENJAMIN JONSON.

(1574-1637.)

Benjamin Jonson was born in Westminster in the spring of 1574, the son of a Protestant minister who had suffered much persecution

under Queen Mary. His father having died about a month before his birth, his mother married, in somewhat less than two years afterwards, Mr. Thomas Fowler, a master-bricklayer in Hartshorn Lane, near Charing Cross. From a private school in the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, young Jonson was transferred, at the expense of a friend of his father, to Westminster School, where, under the instruction of the eminent Camden, whom, in later years, he gratefully addressed as—

“ Camden, most reverend head, to whom I owe  
All that I am in arts, and all I know,”—

he progressed to the uppermost form. In or about 1589, the same friend who had sent him to Westminster School procured for him an exhibition at St. John's College, Cambridge; but, unhappily, the exhibition being inadequate to his support, and his parents being unable to assist him, he was compelled, after a few months' residence at the University, to return home, where his good-natured father-in-law, in default of a better resource, took him into his own business. After some months' ineffectual endeavour to reconcile himself to this uncongenial occupation, young Jonson escaped from it by withdrawing to the continent, and entering (1592) as a volunteer into the army then employed in Flanders. His stay in the Low Countries did not extend much beyond one campaign; he had, however, an opportunity of signalising his personal courage, having, as he told Drummond, encountered and killed an enemy (whose spoils he carried off) in the sight of both armies. In those days, when great battles were rarely fought, and armies lay for half a campaign in sight of each other, it was not unusual for champions to advance into the middle ground and challenge an adversary; and it was in a *duello* of this nature that Jonson fought and conquered. Our poet always talked with complacency of his military career. He loved, he says, the profession of arms; and he boldly affirms, in an appeal “to the True Soldier,” that while he followed it “he did not shame it by his actions.”

Jonson brought little from Flanders, whence he was probably induced to return by the death of his father-in-law, but the reputation of a brave man, a smattering of Dutch, and an empty purse. He repaired to his mother's house; but not of the humour to profit, in long inactivity, by her scanty resources, he adopted the resolution of turning his education to what account he could, and, like most of the poets his contemporaries, seeking a subsistence from the stage. He was now about nineteen. He was well qualified for the stage, having a manly form, a good face, and a good voice. “I never,” said the

Duchess of Newcastle, "heard any man read well but my husband ; and I have heard him say he never heard any man read well but Ben Jonson ; and yet he hath heard many in his time." It does not appear in what theatre he entered upon the career of actor, but the career was very speedily closed by an unfortunate affair. He had some dispute with a fellow-player, who "appealed him to a duel ;" they met, and he killed his antagonist, who seems to have behaved with little honour, having brought to the field, as our author told Drummond, a sword ten inches longer than his own. His victory, however, left him little cause for exultation : he was severely wounded in the arm, thrown into prison for murder, and, as he says himself, "brought near to the gallows." While in prison, a popish priest got hold of him, and induced him to renounce the faith of his forefathers ; but, at a more mature age, he remedied this error, and sought to understand the ground of his belief, and diligently studied the fathers, and those wiser guides who preached the words of truth in simplicity.

On his release from prison—how effected does not appear—he returned to his former pursuits, and, being unable to maintain himself, complicated the difficulties of his position by marrying (1594) a young woman, who, happily, was of a domestic turn, and applied the slender means at her disposal to the most effective purpose. She was dead when Jonson visited Scotland in 1618. The occupation which Jonson followed was that of writing for the stage, at first in conjunction with dramatists of established position, afterwards, as he himself acquired reputation in this way, solely. We know not what productions he had participated in prior to 1596 ; but between 25 Nov. 1596 and 10 May, 1597, *Every Man in his Humour* was performed eleven times ; and its author's reputation was already so solid, as to induce niggard Henslowe and his son-in-law Alleyn to advance money upon several of his plots in embryo. A production of his wife's this year was in the unprofitable form of a son. There is a memorandum of Henslowe's at this date recording an advance to Jonson of "five shillings ;" and there are two other sums of "fower pounds" and "twenty shillings" recorded in the same discreditable diary as advanced, in 1597, to Benjamin Jonson, *player*, upon "books he was to writte for us before Chrysmas next after the date hereof, which he showed the plotte unto the company." Gifford is disposed to identify this book with *The Case is Altered*, which may be regarded as the second of our author's dramas in point of date. In 1598 Jonson produced an improved version of *Every Man in his Humour*, transferring the scene from its previous site of Florence to London, changing the Italian names into English ones, and introducing such

appropriate circumstances as the new place of action seemed to require. The play thus revised was acted at the Blackfriars, and Shakespeare's name stands at the head of the principal performers in it.

*Every Man in his Humour*, though it did not, even in its altered state, much improve the finances of the author, yet brought him what he valued more: from this period he perceptibly grew into acquaintance and familiarity with the first characters among the wise and the great. This was not seen with equanimity by his dramatic associates; and the envy which it provoked pursued him to the end of his career. Marston and Dekker, who had frequently laboured in conjunction with our poet, appear to have viewed his success with peculiar mortification, and to have lent themselves assiduously to the cabal raised against him. What ground of offence they chose, or



THE MERMAID TAVERN.

what motive they alleged, cannot now be told; but Jonson affirms that at this period they began "to provoke him on every stage with their petulant styles, as if they wished to single him out for their adversary." Nor was the language of Ben, in his prologues and epilogues more especially, much calculated to win over the audiences to his side. Jonson would on no occasion stoop to court their favour by unworthy condescensions to their prejudices. He had nobler aims in view,—to correct their taste, to inform their judgment, to improve their morals; and to these aims he steadily adhered

through good and evil report, and through all the exigencies of his chequered life. It cannot be wondered, therefore, that he was no favourite with the vulgar.

*Every Man out of his Humour*, the play which next followed, was well received, produced, as it was, under the immediate patronage of Queen Elizabeth, to whom already our poet was much indebted, as one who

“ With her judicious favours did infuse  
Courage and strength into his youthful muse.”

The satire of this piece was at once and widely felt; for the author had in it touched the foibles of the time with a hand as unsparing as it was skilful. “He did gather humours wherever he went,” says the old critic; “and a judgment more quick to perceive, or more dexterous to embody, whatever was extravagant or ridiculous, will not readily be found.”

Three distinct notices of Jonson appear in Henslowe’s memorandum-book for the year 1599. The sum of forty shillings was advanced to him and Dekker for a play which they were writing in conjunction; a like sum for another,—*Robert the Second, King of Scottes*,—in which Chettle was joined with them; and a third sum of twenty shillings for a tragedy,—*The Scottes Tragedy*,—which he was probably writing alone. None of these are now extant; but *Cynthia’s Revels*, on which he was at the time employed, was brought out in the following year.

This *comical satire* was evidently directed at the grave and formal manners of the court, which had undergone a great change after the execution of Queen Mary: Elizabeth herself growing melancholy, fretful, and morose; and her courtiers, prohibited from being gay, becoming affected, and exchanging their former fashions for fantastic and apish refinements, for *euphuism* in language, and for manners as affected as the language. *Cynthia’s Revels* was acted in 1600, at the Blackfriars Theatre, by the children of the queen’s chapel, having first been privately performed at Whitehall. The juvenile games, the ceremonious fopperies, conducted with such inflexible gravity, might, to those who comprehended both the motives and the objects of the drama, be sufficiently entertaining; for its subsequent success it must have been indebted to the delight which the good citizens took in seeing the fantastic tricks of the courtiers exposed to ridicule. The arrogant line in the epilogue, however,

“ By God, ’tis good, and if you lik’t you may,”

was taken up, to the author’s annoyance, not by those whose grotesque humours he exposed, but by his professional rivals, who

already affected to take part of the satire to themselves, and prepared a grand literary attack upon him, to revenge the imaginary insult. Of this Jonson obtained full information; and as his antagonists persisted in ridiculing him on the stage, he found it necessary to draw up *The Poetaster*, in which, with the untrussing, the whipping, and the stinging, he anticipated and answered many of the accusations subsequently brought against him in the *Satiromastix*.

*The Poetaster*, which was written in fifteen weeks, was brought out at the Blackfriars' Theatre, by the children of the queen's chapel, in 1601, and favourably received by the public; though it gave offence, by its reprehension of military and legal abuses, to some of the military and the lawyers. Of the former, Jonson got quit without much difficulty; but the lawyers were not so easily shaken off; and he was indebted, in some degree, for his escape to the kindness of one of his earliest friends, "the worthy master Richard Martin," who undertook for the innocency of his intentions to the lord chief justice, and to whom he subsequently dedicated the play.

But there was yet a party which could neither be silenced nor shamed. The players, who had so long provoked him with their petulance on the stage, felt the bitterness of his reproof, and had address enough to persuade their fellows that all were included in his satire. Jonson readily admits that he taxed some of the players, — Marston and Dekker, who had led the cabal against him, he had introduced under the respective names of Crispinus and Demetrius, but he adds, that he touched but a few of them, and even these few he forbore to name. He treats their clamours, however, with supreme contempt, and only regrets the hostility of *some better natures* whom they had drawn over to their sides, and induced to *run in the same vile line with themselves*. By 'better natures' the commentators have insisted that Shakespeare was meant, whom it has been their whim to place in a position, with relation to Ben Jonson, of injured innocence. Mr. Gifford has well exposed the inanity of their speculations on this point.

After a few representations of *The Poetaster*, Jonson added what he calls an Apologetical Dialogue, in which he bore the chief part: it is in a vein of high-toned indignation, springing from conscious innocence and worth; and there is a generous burst of pathos and poetry in the concluding speech, to which an equal will not easily be found. It failed, however, to quell his enemies, who put forward Dekker to attack him in the *Satiromastix*, in which the author, absolutely foaming at every page, takes up the characters of his predecessor, turning them *the seamy side without*, and produces a coarse and ill-wrought caricature.



Among Ben Jonson's occupations this year was the "writing adycions to Jeronymo," with which old Henslowe was so pleased, that he absolutely authorised son Alleyn to advance "Bengemy," as he writes Benjamin, "xxxx sh." on them. Had the records of other theatres been preserved, we should probably have found the name of our poet among their contributors, for he must have produced much more at this time than has reached us.

In the concluding lines of the Apologetical Dialogue Jonson announces that since the comic Muse had been so ominous to him,—that is to say, to the censure of the law, the army, &c.,—he would try if tragedy had a kinder aspect. He had two subjects at this time in view: "Lent unto Bengemy Johnsonsone," writes curmudgeon Henslowe, "at the appoyntment of E. Alleyn and Wm. Birdes, the 22 June, 1602, in earnest of a booke called *Richard Crook-back*, and for new adycions for Jeronymo, the some of x lb." *Richard Crook-back* has perished; another tragedy, then preparing by Ben Jonson, *Sejanus*, was produced at the Globe theatre in 1603. This tragedy, in which Shakespeare played a part, met with great opposition on its first representation, and was withdrawn for a short time from the stage. The author, however, suffered neither in his reputation nor his peace on the occasion; his fame was too well established to be affected by the fury of a party, and he proceeded at leisure to remodel his play.

About this time Jonson probably began to acquire that turn for conviviality for which he was afterwards noted. Sir Walter Raleigh, previous to his unfortunate engagement with Cobham, had founded a club of wits at the *Mermaid*, a celebrated tavern in Friday Street. Of this club, which combined more talent and genius, perhaps, than ever met together before or since, our author was a member; and here, for many years, he regularly repaired with Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Selden, Cotton, Carew, Martin, Donne, and many others, whose names call up a mingled feeling of reverence and delight. Here, in the full flow and confidence of friendship, the lively and interesting "wit-combats" took place between Shakespeare and our author; and hither Beaumont lets his thoughts wander in his letter to Jonson from the country:

"What things have we seen  
Done at the *Mermaid* / heard words that have been  
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,  
As if that every one from whom they came  
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest!"

Fairer prospects began to open on Jonson at the accession of James, who was liberal to men of merit, and who quickly received

our poet into his favour. When the court and city prepared to receive their new sovereign, in the taste of those times, with a magnificent display of scenery, speeches, &c., our author was applied to for the design and execution of the pageant, two-fifths of which he prepared himself, assigning, with the good-hearted placability which in reality characterised him, the remainder of the commission to Dekker, by whom he had been, but a few months since, so grossly assailed. Both seem to have exerted themselves greatly, and both printed an account of their respective parts. Our author's description, equally elegant and learned, was entirely appreciated by James, himself something of a poet and more of a scholar; and, with the extraordinary merits of the spirited *Panegyric on the first Meeting of the Parliament*, led him, from that moment, to take Jonson under his especial protection. In this opinion of his genius as well as learning he must have been strengthened by the next publication of Jonson, who had been summoned to Althorpe to prepare a poetical compliment for the reception of the Queen and Prince Henry, who were expected there on their way from Scotland to London. He must have been well acquainted with this family; he terms Sir Robert Spencer "his noble friend," and observes that "his principal object" in suffering the *entertainment* to come abroad was, "to do that serviceable right to you which our affection owes, and which your lordship's merits challenge." His next work, as nearly as we can trace them, was a similar entertainment prepared for the reception of the royal family at the seat of Sir Wm. Cavendish, at Highgate, on May-day, a festival at that time honoured with high observance. In the same year Jonson revised his *Sejanus*. As it was first acted, a *second pen had a good share in it* (who this *second pen* was has not been determined); the play as recast was wholly the production of our poet: it was received with applause, and kept possession of the stage till long after the Restoration. Among the commendatory poems prefixed to the revised play was one by Marston, who had long since repented of the part he had taken against the author, and resumed his old habits of kindness, dedicating to Jonson, in terms of the highest honour, his tragedy of the *Malcontent*, which must have been written in the year after the *Satiromastix* appeared, and referring to him in the epilogue as his "liberal and cordial friend."

In connexion with Marston, a circumstance occurred about this time which reflects the highest honour on Ben Jonson. Jointly with Chapman, Marston had brought out a play, *Eastward Hoe*, which was well received, as its merits and pleasantry deserved; but there was a passage in it reflecting on the Scotch, which gave offence to

Sir James Murray, who represented it in so strong a light to the king, that orders were given to arrest the author. It does not appear that Jonson had any particular share in the composition of the piece; he expressly declares he had nothing to do with the offensive passage; but as he was undoubtedly privy to its writing, and "an accessory before the fact," he considered himself as equally implicated with the rest. He stood in such favour, however, that he was not molested; but this did not satisfy him; and he therefore, with a high sense of honour, voluntarily accompanied his two friends to prison, to share their fate. This generosity operated, probably, in favour of all three, for they soon received an unconditional pardon.

When they were first committed, a report had been propagated, Jonson tells us, that they were all to have their ears and noses slit. This had reached his mother; and at an entertainment which he gave on his deliverance, and at which, among other celebrities, Camden and Selden were present, she drank to her son, "and showed him a paper which she designed, if the rumoured sentence had taken effect, to have mixed with his drink; and it was strong and lusty poison." "To show that she was no churl," Jonson adds, "she designed to have first drunk of it herself." From such a mother he must have derived no small part of his unconquerable spirit.

In 1605, there being several royal and noble foreigners in this country, the queen, to receive them in a manner worthy of the splendour and magnificence of the English court, expressly enjoined our poet to prepare a masque, in which she and the prime beauties of the land might bear a part. This gave rise to the *Masque of Blackness*.

*The Fox*, one of the dramas of which the nation may be justly proud, was the work of five weeks. No human power, however, could have completed such a work in such a time, unless the author's mind had been previously stored with all the treasure of ancient and modern learning, on which he might draw at pleasure. This was eminently the case with Ben Jonson. Before he was three-and-twenty, he had mastered the Greek and Roman Classics; and was, at the period of which we are now speaking, among the first scholars of the age. He had translated Horace, and, as it would seem, Aristotle's *Poetics*, and prepared a voluminous body of notes to illustrate them; he had made prodigious collections in theology, history, and poetry, from the best writers, in his commonplace books, and perhaps drawn up his Grammar. *The Fox* is dedicated, in a strain of unparalleled elegance and vigour, to the two Universities, before whom it had been represented with all the applause which might be anticipated from such distinguished and competent judges of its worth. The English

stage had hitherto seen nothing so truly classical, so learned, so correct, and so chaste.

About this time Jonson re-entered the bosom of the Protestant church, from which he had been for twelve years a wanderer.

In 1606, 1607, and 1608, we have on record the *Masque and Barriers*, the *Masque of Whiteness*, and several other similar entertainments, composed by Ben Jonson for the queen, Lord Salisbury, the Merchant Tailors' Company, and Lord Haddington respectively.

In 1609 appeared *The Silent Woman* and the *Masque of Queens*; the latter of which was published, with an ample commentary, at the request of Prince Henry, who was curious to learn the authorities from which the author had derived his incantations, &c. The attire of the witches in this masque was devised by Inigo Jones. The year 1610 produced the beautiful *Masque of Oberon* and the *Barriers*. The *Alchemist*, the noblest effort of Jonson's genius, appeared about the same time. As if to show his detractors that his obligations to the ancients were those of choice, and not of necessity, the author constructed the whole of this wonderful drama on the vices and follies of the age; trusting to the extent and variety of his reading for such apt allusions and illustrations as appear to spring spontaneously from the subject.

*Catiline* was brought out in 1611, and inscribed by the author to the Earl of Pembroke, as being, in his opinion, the best of the tragedies which he had hitherto produced. Besides publishing this play, Jonson found leisure this year to amuse himself with arranging that immense farrago of burlesque "testimonies to the author's merit," which accompanied the first appearance of *Coryat's Crudities*.

In the succeeding year our author was probably engaged on some of those exquisite masques which appeared in the folio of 1616, and to which no dates were prefixed. In 1613 we find him at Paris, where, among other leading personages, he visited Cardinal du Perron, who, in compliment to his learning, showed him his translation of Virgil, of which Jonson freely expressed his disapprobation.

In 1614 appeared *Bartholomew Fair*; and in 1616—we cannot now identify the particular productions of the intervening period—the excellent comedy of the *Devil's an Ass*. In the same year our author published a folio volume of his previous works, containing besides Comedies, Tragedies, and Masques, the first book of his Epigrams (the remainder, if ever published, have been lost), and a collection of poems called the *Forest*. It is probable that he contemplated, in some future period of retirement and ease, to collect, revise, and publish all his works; but the loss of all his manuscripts by fire, and the

fatal illness which almost immediately afterwards seized him, rendered all such views abortive.

In the same year also, the kindness of King James for our poet was manifested in the substantial shape of a grant to him for life, by letters patent, of a pension of 100 marks; the first annual and determinate sum ever assigned to poets laureate, in which dignity Jonson now succeeded Daniel. In the summer of 1618 he made, on foot, a journey to Scotland, where he spent several months in a series of visits; the last of which was to Drummond of Hawthorndean, for whom he appears to have conceived an attachment, natural enough to his effusive goodheartedness, but of which the object was not worthy. That, living in comparatively obscure retirement, Drummond should take notes, for his own future entertainment and that of his visitors, of the observations upon men, and things, and books, of an observer so wise and so witty, and so favourably placed for observation as Ben Jonson, was not only excusable, but laudable; the objection is, that the conversations were not noticed fairly; and that Drummond, "with the malice and envy of a bad heart," which Chetwood ascribes to him, merely took down—and this in his own way—such portions only, or for the great part, of his visitor's observations, as told against somebody or something. Mr. Gifford, in his *Life of Ben Jonson*, clearly demonstrates how utterly unjust are the attacks upon his author, that have been based upon the Conversations left by Drummond; with whom, however, the acerb critic is savage beyond the demerits of the case.

On his return to England, Jonson, crowned with the favours of his sovereign, the most distinguished wits of his time crowding his train and courting his acquaintance, was invited by Dr. Corbet to Christ Church, Oxford, where he was created M.A. (July 19, 1619), and where he spent some time, composing those beautiful masques which were commissioned from him, both for the nobility and the court at this period; and some of those pieces which are mentioned in the *Exsecration on Vulcan*, and which were destroyed with his study. There perished his *Commentary on the Poetics*; his Grammar complete, of which we have now but the fragments; his *Journey into Scotland*, his *May Lord*, and several other dramas; the unfinished *Life of Henry V.*, *Rape of Proserpine*, the poem in celebration of the ladies of England; and, more valuable perhaps than all, a vast body of philological collections, with notes from the classics, the fruit of twenty years' laborious study.

It is probable that Jonson spent much of his time at the country seats of the nobility and gentry, as he has several allusions to visits of this kind; and we know that he attended the court in some of the

royal progresses: he was at Burleigh, and at Belvoir Castle, and at Windsor, where his masque of the *Gipsies Metamorphosed* was performed, and at Newmarket. In 1621 the king conferred on him the reversion (which, however, he never realised) of the office of the Master of the Revels, and would have knighted him, but Jonson prudently declined the honour.

From 1616 to 1625 Jonson had never turned his thoughts to the drama, a labour in which he never delighted; his productions all this time were wholly occupied with masques and occasional poems: and his leisure seems to have been agreeably occupied in correspondence with the literati of this and other countries, in attendance upon the court, in visits to his friends, and in his own fine library, especially rich in scarce and valuable books; which, we have the testimony of Selden and others, he was ever ready to allow the liberal use of to his friends and to learned men. Moreover, there are more valuable books known to have been given by Jonson to individuals than by any person of that period.

In 1625, the pressure of pecuniary difficulties, materially aggravated by the expense and necessary inaction of a long illness—a palsy—and doubtless, to a certain extent, by the death of his steady patron King James, rendered it necessary for him to turn his attention to the stage; and he produced the *Staple of News*, a comedy of no ordinary merit. Next year came the pleasant *Anti-masque of Jophiel*; but during the following three years we have nothing from our poet's pen, whose infirmities were rapidly increasing, and with them his wants. He had laboured from his youth under a scorbutic affection, which assailed him with increasing virulence as his constitution gave way; and to this was added a tendency to dropsy, not the least of his evils. He was no longer able to leave his room, or to move in it without assistance; and in this condition he applied again to the theatre, and produced the comedy of the *New Inn*, which was brought out Jan. 19, 1630. The play was driven from the stage by a cabal; but the affecting epilogue, in which "the maker, sick and sad," appeals for consideration to the audience, aroused the kindness of Charles I., who immediately sent 100*l.* to the suffering poet, raised the 100 marks, laureatal salary, to 100*l.*, and added a tierce of Canary, Jonson's favourite wine; his majesty also gratified the poet by commanding him, in conjunction with Inigo Jones, to prepare the usual entertainments for the festivity of the new year. The first piece was *Love's Triumph through Callipolis*; the second, produced about two months after, was *Chloridia*, better known for its having given birth to the dispute between these ancient friends than by any merit of its own: it unfortunately happened that on the title-page

the name of Ben Jonson was printed before that of Inigo Jones; the consequence of which was, that the jealous architect took care to employ his own predominance at court to prevent Ben Jonson's being again employed there. A source of emolument was thus lost to him at a time when his helpless state rendered every such source of peculiar importance to him; and doubly so, that he was utterly devoid of human prudence; and so generous in his hospitality, that his table was ever open, and liberally, to his friends. The mean cruelty of Jones, in excluding Jonson from court patronage, had an unfavourable effect upon his circumstances in many respects; for the city, finding him out of favour at court, characteristically withdrew their own patronage; and the poet's official salary being at all times irregularly paid, he was driven to extremities, and to address pathetic epistles to the Lord Treasurer Western, to the Duke of Newcastle, and others for relief, which was not withheld; and he thus obtained



BEN JONSON'S MONUMENT.

intervals of ease. In 1632 he produced the *Magnetic Lady*, and a few trifling pieces of poetry; in 1633 his last dramatic work, the *Tale of a Tub*, was submitted to the stage. He continued, while his *faint and faltering tongue* could articulate, to pay his annual duty to his royal master, and he wrote several interludes for the Duke of Newcastle; but one bright ray alone broke through the gloom which hung over his closing hours. In this he produced the *Sad Shepherd*, a pastoral drama of exquisite beauty, the greater half of which, however, was unfortunately lost in the confusion that followed his death.

That event took place on the 6th August, 1637; and on the 7th the departed poet was buried in Westminster Abbey, "in the north aisle, in the path of square stone, opposite to the 'scutcheon of Robertus de Ros." The place is identified by a stone, on which are engraved the words,—

"O rare Ben Jonson!"

which Aubrey says, "Sir John Young, of Great Milton, happening to pass through the abbey, and not enduring that the remains of so great a man should lie at all without a memorial, gave one of the workmen eighteenpence to cut." A subscription, indeed, was raised for a noble monument to Rare Ben Jonson; but the Great Rebellion came on, the money was returned to the subscribers, and the monument was not executed.

Jonson left no family; his wife died before 1618, and none of their children survived him.

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## JOHN MARSTON.

(Born circa 1575.)

Of the personal history of John Marston scarcely any thing whatever is known. The account which Oldys, Baker, and others have adopted from Wood will not bear the slightest investigation. That he was born somewhere about 1575 may be assumed from the fact that in 1605 he was on terms of friendship with Ben Jonson, to whom *The Malcontent* is dedicated, with warmth and apparent sincerity. Some complimentary verses also, written by him, are prefixed to *Sejanus*; and in the same year he joined Jonson and Chapman in writing *Eastward Hoe*, for which they were all committed to prison, and were in danger of losing their ears and noses, but received a pardon. We, however, find him afterwards glancing with some



severity at Ben, on account of his *Catiline* and *Sejanus*, in his epistle prefixed to *Sophonisba*. "Know," says he, "that I have not laboured in this poem to relate any thing as an historian, but to enlarge every thing as a poet. To transcribe authors, quote authorities, and to translate Latin prose orations into English blank verse, hath in this subject been the least aim of my studies." Langbaine observes, and with good reason, "that none who are acquainted with the works of Ben Jonson can doubt that he is meant here, if they will compare the orations in Sallust with those in his *Catiline*."

On his part, Ben Jonson, we are informed by Drummond of Hawthorndean, spoke of Marston with great disrespect, and said he had fought him several times.

The following is the chronological list of Marston's plays :

1. Antonio and Mellida. Tragedy. 1602.
2. Antonio's Revenge. Tragedy. 1602. (A continuation of the preceding.)
3. Malcontent. Tragi-Comedy. 1604.
4. Dutch Courtesan. Comedy. 1605. Altered and revived by Mrs. Behn, under the title of the Match in Newgate.
5. Parasitaster. Comedy. 1606.
6. The Wonder of Women; or, Sophonisba. Tragedy. Performed 1595; printed 1606.
7. What you will. Comedy. 1607.
8. The Insatiate Countess. Tragedy. 1613. (This play has been attributed rather to W. Barksted.)

Marston is said to have been living in 1633.

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## JOHN FLETCHER.

(1579-1625.)

"John Fletcher, one of the happy triumvirate (the other two being Jonson and Shakespeare) of the chief dramatic poets of our nation in the last foregoing age; among whom there might be said to be a symmetry of perfection, while each excelled in his own peculiar way: Ben Jonson, in his elaborate pains and knowledge of authors; Shakespeare, in his pure vein of wit and natural poetic height; Fletcher, in a courtly elegance and gentle familiarity of style, and withal a wit and invention so overflowing, that the luxuriant branches thereof were frequently thought convenient to be lopped off by his almost inseparable companion, Francis Beaumont."\*

\* Phillips.

John Fletcher, the son of Richard Fletcher, vicar of Rye, Sussex—who in 1589 became Bishop of Bristol, and in 1594 Bishop of London—was born at Rye, December 1579. After receiving his earlier education under his father's roof, he was admitted (15th October, 1591) a pensioner of Benet College, Cambridge, of which his father had been fellow and president; and in 1593 was made one of the Bible clerks. We have no record of his progress at the University; but he had left it, was pursuing a literary career in London, and had become intimate with Ben Jonson, in 1607, when he wrote a "copy of verses" in praise of Ben's *Fox*, and which were prefixed to that comedy. He made, at about the same time, that acquaintance—soon ripening into close friendship—with Francis Beaumont, which has joined their names together in a union never to be severed while and wherever English poetry or its memory shall endure. *The Woman-Hater* (1606 or 1607) is regarded as the unassisted production of Fletcher's pen, prior to his literary association with Beaumont; and *Thierry and Theodoret* is generally considered as coming within the same category. After that association had come into effect, Fletcher produced, of his own composition, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, a dramatic pastoral, which, on its first representation in the early part of 1610, was absolutely condemned: the "many-headed beast" having no idea, as the indignant author himself tells us, "what a pastoral tragi-comedy was; and, missing Whitsun ales, cream, wassail, and morrice-dances, growing angry." *The Faithful Shepherdess* was revived at court, on the occasion of an entertainment given by the queen to the king at Denmark House, on Twelfth Night, 1634; and being well received there, the judicious manager of the Blackfriars forthwith discerned its merits, and it was "acted divers times with great applause" at his establishment. From *The Faithful Shepherdess* Milton borrowed wisely and well for *Comus*. Fletcher's next unassisted play appears to have been *The Captain*, first acted in the autumn of 1612, or the spring of 1613. It is a production very indifferent in itself, and repulsive in much of its detail. *Wit without Money* (produced after August 1614) Mr. Dyce considers to be also the sole work of Fletcher. The same acute critic doubts much, in like manner, whether Beaumont had any thing to do with *The Custom of the Country*, which, however, is generally assigned to the conjunct authorship. Somewhere about 1614, Fletcher was concerned with Daborne, Field, and Massinger in the production of a comedy for Henslowe, called *The Jeweller of Amsterdam, or the Hague*. After Beaumont's death in 1616, Fletcher produced—

Boadicea.

The Knight of Malta.

Valentinian.

The Queen of Corinth. (In conjunction with William Rowley.)

The Mad Lover.

The Loyal Subject. 1618.

The False One. (In conjunction with Massinger.)

The Double Marriage.

The Humorous Lieutenant.

Women Pleased.

The Woman's Prize; or, the Tamer tamed.

The Chances.

Monsieur Thomas.

The Island Princess. 1621.

The Pilgrim. 1621.

The Wildgoose Chase. 1621.

The Prophetess. 1622.

The Sea Voyage. 1622.

The Spanish Curate. 1622.

The Beggar's Bush. 1622.

The Maid of the Mill. 1623. (In conjunction with William Rowley.)

The Devil of Dowgate; or, Usury put to Use. 1623. (Supposed the same with the Night-Walker, which, after Fletcher's death, appeared in his name, corrected by Shirley.)

The Wandering Lovers. 1623. (In conjunction with Massinger; now lost.)

Love's Cure; or, the Martial Maid. 1623.

A Wife for a Month. 1623.

Rule a Wife and Have a Wife. 1623.

The Fair Maid of the Inn.

The Noble Gentleman. (Completed after Fletcher's death by Shirley.)

The Elder Brother.

Nice Valour; or, the Passionate Madman. (Supposed to have been completed after Fletcher's death by some other dramatist.)

The Bloody Brother; or, Rollo Duke of Normandy. (Completed after Fletcher's death by Rowley.)

The Lover's Progress. (Completed after Fletcher's death by Massinger.)

Love's Pilgrimage. (Completed after Fletcher's death by Shirley.)

And last, though amongst the greatest, the Two Noble Kinsmen, which, according to the title-page of the oldest edition (1634), was "written by the memorable worthies of their times, Mr. John Fletcher and Mr. William Shakespeare."

Shakespeare's share in this play, what if any, has been matter of dispute amongst the leading critics of past and present times. Mr. Dyce, after an elaborate consideration of the question, considers that the whole of the first act, the first scene of the third, and some portion of the fifth, are Shakespeare's, written by him towards a reconstruction of Richard Edwards' *Palamon and Arcite*, as itself altered by some writer in 1594; and that the period of these Shakespeare portions was in or about January 1610, long anterior to the remaining portions contributed by Fletcher. Our poet died of the plague in

August 1625, and was buried in the church of St. Saviour's, Southwark. It is believed that he was never married.

## WILLIAM ROWLEY.

(*Born circa 1580.*)

Of William Rowley all that is personally known is, that he was head of the Prince of Wales' company of comedians from 1613 to 1616. Of the time or place of his birth or death we are altogether ignorant. That he lived on terms of intimacy with the dramatic writers of his time, is sufficiently evident from his having written in conjunction with many of them; and, if we may believe the title-page, in one he received assistance from Shakespeare himself.

Rowley's dramatic productions are—

1. *A New Wonder: a Woman never vexed.* Comedy.
2. *All's Lost by Lust.* Tragedy.
3. *Match at Midnight.* Comedy.
4. *A Shoemaker's a Gentleman.* Comedy.
5. *The Travels of Three English Brothers.* (Written in conjunction with Day and Wilkins.)
6. *A Fair Quarrel.* Comedy. (Written in conjunction with Middleton.)
7. *The World toss'd at Tennis.* Masque. (In conjunction with Middleton.)
8. *The Spanish Gipsy.* Comedy. (In conjunction with Middleton.)
9. *The Changeling.* Tragedy. (In conjunction with Middleton.)
10. *The Maid of the Mill.* (In conjunction with Fletcher.)
11. *The Old Law.* Tragi-Comedy. (In conjunction with Massinger and Middleton.)
12. *The Witch of Edmonton.* Tragi-Comedy. (In conjunction with Dekker and Ford.)
13. *The Birth of Merlin.* Tragi-Comedy. (Said to have been in conjunction with Shakespeare.)
14. *The Cure for a Cuckold.* Comedy. (In conjunction with Webster.)
15. *The Thracian Wonder.* Comedy. (In conjunction with Webster.)
16. *Fortune by Land and Sea.* Comedy. (In conjunction with Heywood.)

The following also are entered in his name on the books of the Stationers' Company:

*The Fool without Book.*  
*A Knave in Print; or, One for Another.*  
*The Nonesuch.*  
*The Book of the Four honoured Loves.*  
*The Parliament of Love.*

Besides his dramatic pieces, Rowley was the author of a very curi-

ous prose tract, entitled *A Search for Money, or the Lamentable Complaint for the Losse of the Wandering Knight, Mounseur L'Argent; or, Come along with me, I know thou lovest Money, &c.* This tract, published in 1609, and reprinted by the Percy Society, "is," says the editor of the reprint, "a lively, fanciful, minute, and amusing picture of manners; and it includes some curious topographical details, chiefly regarding London and its suburbs. The author supposes himself and some other disbanded soldiers to go in search of money, personified under the figure of the Wandering Knight. This quest leads them through various parts of the metropolis, and among different classes of society, which are described with humour, spirit, and fidelity."

### ANTHONY BREWER.

(Born circa 1580.)

The chief title of Anthony Brewer to literary fame is, singularly enough, founded upon a play which, though generally passing under his name, is believed by the most competent judges to have been written by some one else; by whom, however, is not even suggested. Winstanley, who assigns *Lingua* to Brewer in the most distinct terms, attributes to him also *Love's Loadstone*, *Llangarther*, and *Love's Dominion*; but here, again, Langbaine (a better authority) positively contradicts him, which he probably would not have done had he not been well satisfied on the point. However this may have been, it seems clear that Brewer (of whose personal history nothing is known, except that he was born in the reign of Elizabeth) was held in esteem by some, at least, of his contemporaries; since in a poem called *Steps to Parnassus*, the author pays him this compliment:

"Let Brewer take his artful pen in hand,  
 Attending Muses will obey command,  
 Invoke the aid of Shakespeare's sleeping clay,  
 And strike from utter darkness new-born day."

*Lingua, or the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for superiority* (first printed 1607), by whomsoever written, is an allegory celebrating the contention of the five senses for the palm of superiority, and the pretensions of *Lingua*, or the tongue, to be admitted as a sixth sense. It is full of child's-play and of old-wives' tales, but is not unadorned with passages displaying strong good sense and powers of fantastic description. Chetwood, in relation to this play, records the

following anecdote, to which, of course, the reader will give implicit credence :

"When this play was acted at Cambridge," says he, "Oliver Cromwell performed the part of 'Tactus,' which he felt so warmly, that it first fired his ambition, and, from the possession of an imaginary crown, he stretched his views to a real one ; to accomplish which, he was content to wade through a sea of blood. The speech with which he was so affected is the following :

'Roses and bays, pack hence ! this crown and robe  
My brows and body circles and invests ;  
How gallantly it fits me ! sure the slave  
Measured my head that wrought this coronet ;  
They lie that say complexions cannot change !  
My blood's ennobled, and I am transform'd  
Unto the sacred temper of a king ;  
Methinks I hear my noble parasites  
Styling me Cæsar, or great Alexander,  
Licking my feet.'"

Whoever was the author of *Lingua* may also be probably considered the author of *Pathomachia*, or *Love's loadstone* ; for both plays are written upon the same plan and very much in the same style, although the former is greatly superior to the latter both in design and execution. Kirkman the bookseller assigned to Anthony Brewer *The Country Girl* (1647) and *The Love-sick King* (1655) ; but, with regard to the first, the initials T. B. stand upon the title-page as those of the author ; and a person named Thomas Brewer, has a commendatory poem prefixed to Humphry Mill's *Night Search*.

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### CYRIL TOURNEUR.

(*Born circa 1580.*)

Cyril Tourneur is known only as an author, none of the dramatic biographers giving any account of him. Winstanley quotes the following distich from a contemporary poet, by which it appears that he was not held in much estimation for his writings :

"His fame unto that pitch was only rais'd  
As not to be despis'd, nor over-prais'd."

He was the author of—

1. *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Acted 1607.
2. *The Atheist's Tragedy* ; or *Honest Man's Revenge*. Acted 1612.
3. *The Nobleman*. A Tragi-Comedy.

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4. A Funeral Poeme upon the Death of the most werthie and true Souldier, Sir Francis Vere, Knight, Captaine of Portsmouth, Lord Governor of His Majestie's Cautionarie Towne of Briell, in Holland. 1609.

5. A Griefe on the Death of Prince Henrie. Expressed in a broken Elegie according to the nature of such a sorrow.

Besides the plays above named, Tourneur was concerned in other dramatic productions, which are either anonymous or have been lost; he is thus mentioned by Robert Daborne, in a letter to Henslowe dated 5th June, 1613: "I have not only laboured my own play, which shall beredy before they (the company) come over, but given Cyril Tourneur an act of the *Arraignment of London* to write, that we may have that likewise ready for them." Of *The Revenger's Tragedy* Mr. Lamb thus writes: "The reality and life of the dialogue, in which Vindici and Hippolito first tempt their mother, and then threaten her with death for consenting to the dishonour of their sister, passes any scenical illusion I ever felt. I never read it but my ears tingle, and I feel a hot blush overspread my cheeks, as if I were presently about to proclaim such malefactions of myself as the brothers here rebuke in their unnatural parent, in words more keen and dagger-like than those which Hamlet speaks to his mother. Such power has the passion of shame, truly represented, not only to strike guilty creatures unto the soul, but to 'appal' even those that are free."\*

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#### ROBERT DABORNE.

(Born circa 1580.)

Robert Daborne, a gentleman of liberal education, master of arts, and in holy orders, is the author of two plays,—*The Christian turned Turk* (1612) and *The Poor Man's Comfort* (1655). His humble fortunes appear to have improved in his later days; for there is extant a sermon preached by him at Waterford, in Ireland, where he had a living.

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#### NATHANIEL FIELD.

(Circa 1584.)

Nathaniel Field, a distinguished member of Henslowe's company of comedians,—for Henslowe actually consented to give him six shillings a week out of his own receipts, in addition to Field's dividend as a sharer—a concession which the old curmudgeon would never

\* Specimens of English Dramatic Poets. Moxon.

have made had he not found Field a very profitable associate,—was also, like many of his fellow-actors, a purveyor for the stage. We have of his own writing two plays; *Woman is a Weathercock*, written before 1610, and the preface to which (it was published in 1612), addressed “to any woman that hath been no weathercock,” lets us into a secret of the authorship of that period: “I did determine not to have dedicated my play to anybody; because forty shillings I care not for, and above, fewe or none will bestowe on these matters.” As Collier remarks, the usual price of a play at this time being 12*l.*, the fee of 2*l.* for a dedication seems a very high charge. *Amends for Ladies*, a second part of *Woman is a Weathercock*, acted before 1611. Both these plays have been reprinted by Mr. Collier, who felt that, considering the celebrity which Nat. Field had of late acquired in consequence of his connection with Massinger in writing the *Fatal Dowry*, it was very desirable that the two plays, in which he was unaided by any contemporary dramatist, should be brought within the reach of the reading public, if only to assist the formation of a judgment as to the probable degree of Massinger’s obligation. Mr. Collier adds, that both plays “are the productions of no ordinary poet; in comic scenes Field excels Massinger, who was not remarkable for his success in this department of the drama; and in those of a serious character he may be frequently placed on a footing of equality.” In one matter the two were certainly on an equality—in misfortune. We have a letter from Field, Massinger, and Daborne, entreating, with humiliating piteousness, a small loan from skinflint Henslowe to save them from imprisonment. In 1601 Field, as one of the Children of Queen Elizabeth’s Revels, played in the *Poetaster*; and in 1608, still on the same establishment, he appeared in *Epicene*. In 1614 Ben Jonson couples him histrionically with Burbage, and speaks of him as “the best actor” of the day. He belonged to the Blackfriars’ company; and having, as we see in the Dulwich Gallery portraits, a rather feminine look, undertook, early in his career, female parts, which he afterwards abandoned, and obtained much celebrity as the hero of Chapman’s *Bussy d’Ambois*; in the prologue to the edition of 1641, he is mentioned as the player “whose action *first* did give it name.” It has been supposed that he died before 1641; because in the prologue just cited it is asserted, “Field is gone,” though Mr. Collier suggests that this expression may merely mean that he had then quitted the profession of the stage. However this may have been, we know nothing further about him after that period.



## PHILIP MASSINGER.

(1584-1640.)

Philip Massinger, the son of a gentleman attached to the household of Henry Earl of Pembroke, was born at Salisbury in 1584, and educated at Wilton, the Wiltshire seat of the Pembroke family. In 1602 he became (May 14) a commoner of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, where he applied himself to study with uncommon energy, his literary acquisitions at this time manifesting themselves multifarious and extensive. The completion of his academical course was, however, prevented ere he had obtained a degree, by the death of his father in 1606, which, closing the supplies which had hitherto maintained him at college, compelled him to withdraw from Oxford, and to seek a livelihood in London. There has been much speculation why the Earl of Pembroke, the father's patron, did not extend his protection and support to the bereaved son; Mr. Gifford<sup>d</sup> plausibly accounts for the circumstance by the suggestion, that Philip Massinger having, as he conjectures, changed at college the religion of his father and his father's patron for Roman Catholicism, at that time the object of persecution, hatred, and terror, did not apply to the earl for assistance, or, at all events, did not obtain it. However this may have been, the period of Massinger's misfortunes commenced with his arrival in London. His father had probably applied most of his property to his education; and when the small remainder was exhausted, he was driven (as he more than once observes) by his necessities, and somewhat inclined perhaps by the peculiar bent of his talents, to dedicate himself to the service of the stage. This expedient, writes Mr. Gifford, though not the most prudent, nor indeed the most encouraging, to a young adventurer, was not hopeless. Men who will ever be considered the pride and boast of their country, Shakespeare, Jonson, Fletcher, were solely, or in a considerable degree, dependent on it; nor were there wanting others of an inferior rank, such as Rowley, Middleton, Chapman, Field, Dekker, Shirley, &c., writers to whom Massinger, without any impeachment of his modesty, might consider himself as fully equal, who subsisted on the emoluments derived from dramatic writing. There was also something to tempt the ambition, or, if it must be so, the vanity of a young adventurer in this pursuit. Literature was the sole means by which a person undistinguished by birth or fortune could at this time hope to acquire the familiarity or secure the friendship of the great; and of all its branches none was so favourably received, or so liberally encouraged, as that of the drama. Tilts and tournaments, the boisterous but magnificent entertainments of the court, together

with pageantries and processions, the absurd and costly mummeries of the city, were rapidly giving way to more elegant and rational amusements, to revels, masques, and plays; nor were the latter merely encouraged by the presence of the nobility; the writers of them were adopted into the number of their acquaintance, and made at once the objects of their bounty and their esteem. It is gratifying to observe how the names of Jonson, Shakspeare, &c. have come to us in connection with the Sidneys, the Pembrokes, the South-amptons, and other great and splendid ornaments of the courts of Elizabeth and James.

Considerations of this kind may naturally be supposed to have had their weight with Massinger, as with so many others; but whatever was his motive, Wood informs us, that "being sufficiently formed for several specimens of wit, he betook himself to making plays." Of what description these specimens were, Anthony does not say; he probably spoke without much examination into a subject for which he had little relish or solicitude; and, indeed, it seems more reasonable to conclude, from the peculiar nature of Massinger's talents, that the drama was his first and sole pursuit.

It must appear singular, after what has been observed, that, with only one exception, we should hear nothing of Massinger for the long period of sixteen years, that is, from his first appearance in London, in 1606, to 1622, when his *Virgin Martyr*, the first of his printed works, was given to the public. That his necessities would not admit of relaxation in his efforts for subsistence is certain; and we have the testimony of a contemporary poet, as preserved by Langbaine, for the rapidity with which he usually composed:

"Ingenious Shakspeare, Massinger that knows  
The strength of plot, to write in verse and prose;  
Whose easy Pegasus will amble o'er  
Some threescore miles of fancy in an hour."

The best solution of the difficulty would seem to be, that the poet's modesty, combined with the urgency of his wants, deterred him, at first, from attempting to write alone; and that he therefore lent his assistance to others of a more confirmed reputation, who could depend on a ready market for their joint productions. When men labour for the demands of the day, it is imprudent to leave much to hazard, and such certainly was the case with Massinger. There is among other proof that he wrote in conjunction with Fletcher, for example, the mournful testimony of the following letter to Henslowe, dragged by Mr. Malone's assiduity from the dust of Dulwich College:

"To our most loving friend, Mr. Philip Hinchlow, Esquire, these.

"Mr. Hinchlow, — You understand our unfortunate extremitie, and I do not thincke you so void of Christianitie but that you would throw so much money into the Thames as wee request now of you, rather than endanger so many innocent lives. You know there is x*l.* more at least to be received of you for the play. We desire you to lend us v*l.* of that, which shall be allowed to you; without which we cannot be bayled, nor I play any more till this be dispatch'd. It will lose you xx*l.* ere the end of the next week, besides the hinderance of the next new play. Pray, sir, consider our cases with humanity, and now give us cause to acknowledge you our true friend in time of neede. Wee have entreated Mr. Danson to deliver this note, as well as to witness your lowe, as our promises, and alwayes acknowledgment to be ever

"Your most thanckfull and loving friends,

"NAT. FIELD."

"The money shall be abated, remayns for the play of Mr. Fletcher and ours.

"ROBERT DABORNE."

"I have ever found you a true loving friend to mee; and in soe small a suite, it beinge honest, I hope you will not fail us.

"PHILIP MASSINGER."

*Indorsed.*

"Received by mee, Robert Danson, of Mr. Hinchlow, for the use of Mr. Deboerne, Mr. Feeld, Mr. Messenger, the sum of v*l.*

"ROB. DANSON."

This letter tripartite, which it is impossible to read without tears at the distress of such men, fully establishes the partnership between Massinger and Fletcher, who must, indeed, have had considerable assistance to enable him to bring forward the numerous plays attributed to his name.

We can thus account for a part of the time which Massinger spent in London before his appearance in print as a professed writer for the stage. But this is not all. Among the manuscript plays collected with much care by Mr. Warburton, and applied with much perseverance by his cook to the covering of her pies, were no fewer than twelve, said to have been written by Massinger;\* and

\* 1. Minerva's Sacrifice. 2. The Forced Lady. 3. Antonio and Valia. 4. The Woman's Plot. 5. The Tyrant. 6. Philenzo and Hippolita. 7. The Judge. 8. Fast and Welcome. 9. Believe as you list. 10. The Honour of Women. 11. The Noble Choice. 12. The Parliament of Love.

though it is now made probable that two of the number do not belong to him, yet scattered notices of others, which assuredly do, prove that he was not inactive.

Four only of the plays named in Mr. Warburton's list occur in the office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, which is continued up to the latest period of Massinger's life; it is therefore evident that this must have been written previous to its commencement; so that these, with *The Old Law*, *The Virgin Martyr*, *The Unnatural Combat*, and *The Duke of Milan*, which are also unnoticed in it, will sufficiently fill up the time till 1622.

There are no data to ascertain the respective periods at which these plays were produced. *The Virgin Martyr*, which has been considered the earliest of Massinger's works, probably because it was the first that appeared in print, has all the manifestations about it of a style decidedly formed, of a hand accustomed to composition, and of a mind stored with the richest acquisitions of a long and successful study. *The Old Law*, which was not printed till many years after Massinger's death, Gifford regards as mainly the work of Middleton and Rowley; Massinger having been merely employed, as an author of high repute, to add or alter a few scenes, so as to warrant the conjunction of his name on the announcement of the play. What has been said of *The Virgin Martyr* applies with equal, perhaps with greater force to *The Unnatural Combat* and *The Duke of Milan*, of which the style is easy, vigorous, and harmonious, bespeaking a confirmed habit of composition, and serving, with the rest, to prove that Massinger began to write for the stage at an earlier period than has been generally supposed.

Massinger appears for the first time in the Office-Book of the Master of the Revels, Dec. 3, 1623; on which day *The Bondman* was brought forward. It was published in 1624, with a dedication to Philip Earl of Montgomery, who, being present at the first representation, had shown his discernment and good taste by what the author calls a *liberal suffrage* in its favour.

Massinger continued to write for the stage with great industry, seldom producing fewer than two new pieces annually. In 1629, his occasions probably again pressing upon him, he gave to the press *The Renegade* and *The Roman Actor*, both of which had been several years before the public. The first of these he inscribed to Lord Berkeley, in a short address composed with taste and elegance. It might seem that a dramatist at once so productive and so successful need not have been in that constant condition of pecuniary embarrassment which afflicted Massinger, in common with the great majority of his fellow-writers for the stage; but at the price then paid for dramatic

productions, our poet, for his most strenuous and most fortunate exertions, would scarcely have realised more than 50*l.* a-year; which, allowing for failures and other adverse circumstances, would leave him—making all allowance for difference in the value of money—scarcely wherewithal to preserve him from want. Nor could the benefit which he derived from the press be very extensive, as of the eighteen dramas which constitute his printed works, only twelve were published during his lifetime; and of these, two, *The Virgin Martyr* and *The Fatal Dowry*, were not wholly his own.

In 1630 he printed *The Pictures*, which had been presented on the stage the preceding year. In 1631 he appears to have been unusually industrious; for he brought forward three pieces in little more than as many months. Two of these, *Believe as you list* and *Unfortunate Piety*, are lost; the third was *The Emperor of the East*, which was published in the following year, and inscribed to Lord Mohun, who was so much pleased with the perusal of the author's printed works, that he commissioned his nephew, Sir Aston Cockayne, to express his high opinion of them, and to present the writer "with a token of his love and intended favour." *The Fatal Dowry*, written, in conjunction with Nat. Field, prior to 1623, was published in 1632.

In the following year Massinger brought forward *The City Madam*. As this play was undoubtedly disposed of to the performers, it remained in manuscript, till the distress brought on the stage by the persecutions of the Puritans induced them to commit it to the press, under the editorial care of Andrew Pennycuicke, an actor of some note, who, in the dedication to the Countess of Oxford, observes, with a spirited reference to the restrictions then laid on the drama: "In that age, when wit and learning were not conquered by injury and violence, this poem was the object of love and commendations." He then adds: "The encouragement I had to prefer this dedication to your powerful protection, proceeds from the universal fame of the deceased author, who (although he composed many) wrote none amiss; and this may justly be ranked among his best."

About this time, too (1632), Massinger printed *The Maid of Honour*, with a dedication to Sir Francis Foljambe and Sir Thomas Bland, which cannot be read without sorrow. He observes, that these gentlemen had continued for many years the patrons of him and his despised studies; and he calls upon the world to take notice, as from himself, that he had not to that time subsisted but that he was supported by their frequent courtesies and favours.

It is not improbable, however, that he was now labouring under the pressure of more than usual want, as the failure of two of his plays had damped his spirits and materially checked the prosecution

of his dramatic studies. No account of the unsuccessful pieces has come down to us; their names do not occur in the Office-Book of Sir H. Herbert, nor should we have known the circumstance had not the author himself, with a modesty which shames some of his contemporaries, and a deference to the judgment of the public which becomes all who write for it, recorded the fact in the prologue to *The Guardian*. To this, probably, we owe the publication of *A New Way to pay Old Debts*, which was now first printed with a sensible and manly address to the Earl of Caernarvon, who had married Lady Sophia Herbert, the sister of Philip Earl of Pembroke. "I was born," he says, "a devoted servant to the thrice noble family and your incomparable lady, and am most ambitious, but with a becoming distance, to be known to your lordship."

Flattered by the success of *The Guardian* (licensed 31st October, 1633), Massinger exerted himself with increased energy, and produced three plays before the expiration of the following year. One of them, the delightful comedy of *A very Woman*, is come down to us; of the others nothing is known but the names, which are registered by the Master of the Revels. In 1635 it does not appear that he brought any thing forward; but in 1636 he wrote *The Bashful Lover*, and printed *The Great Duke of Florence*, which had then been many years on the stage, with a dedication to Sir Robert Wiseman, of Thorrell's Hall, Essex. In this, which is merely expressive of his gratitude for a long series of kindness, he acknowledges, "and with a zealous thankfulness, that for many years he had but faintly subsisted if he had not often tasted of his bounty." In this precarious state of dependence passed the life of a man who is charged with no want of industry, suspected of no extravagance, and whose works were, at this very period, the boast and delight of the stage.

*The Bashful Lover* is the latest play of Massinger's writing which we possess; but there were three others posterior to it, of which the last, *The Anchoress of Pausilippo*, was acted January 26, 1640. Previously to this he had sent to the press one of his early plays, *The Unnatural Combat*, which he inscribed to Anthony Senteleger (whose father, Sir Wareham, had been his particular admirer), being, as he says, ambitious to publish his many favours to the world. It is pleasant to find the author, at the close of his blameless life, avowing, as he does, with an amiable modesty, that the noble and eminent persons to whom his former works were dedicated, did not think themselves disparaged by being celebrated as the patrons of his humble studies, "in the first file of which," he continues, "I am confident you shall have no cause to blush to find your name written."

Massinger died on the 17th March, 1640. He went to bed in good

health, and was found dead in the morning, in his own house on the Bankside. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Saviour's, and the comedians paid the last sad duty to his name by attending him to the grave. It does not appear that a stone or inscription of any kind marked the place where his dust was deposited; even the memorial of his mortality is given with a pathetic brevity which accords but too well with the obscure and humble passages of his life: "March 20, 1639-40, buried Philip Massinger, a stranger."

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### FRANCIS BEAUMONT.

(1584-1616.)

Francis Beaumont, the third son of Sir Francis Beaumont, one of the justices of the Court of Common Pleas, was born, conjecturally, at his father's ancestral seat, Grace-Dieu, in Leicestershire, but this is by no means certain, in the year 1584. In 1596, he was admitted a gentleman-commoner of Broadgate Hall (now Pembroke College), Oxford, and quitting it without a degree, was entered of the Inner Temple, 3d November, 1600. In 1602 appeared his first literary composition, a long paraphrase of Ovid's Tale of *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus*. In 1607 we find a copy of verses addressed by Beaumont to his "dear friend" Ben Jonson, prefixed to this dramatist's *Fox*, in company with a similar encomium from the pen of John Fletcher, with whom Ben Jonson, it is pleasant to assume, had made the younger of the youthful poets acquainted. By whomsoever introduced to each other, however, it is certain that the friendship of these two became of the closest intimacy. "There was," says old Aubrey, "a wonderful consimilitude of phancy between them, which caused that dearness of friendship." They lived together on the Bankside (in Southwark,) near the Playhouse. Their personal friendship soon became extended to a partnership in literary productions, which endured, without jealousy or distrust on the part of either to the other, so long as their joint lives endured.

The extraordinary industry which they manifested in this conjoint authorship may be attributed, among other causes, to the expediency of aiding the means of subsistence. Beaumont, indeed, received under the will of his elder brother Henry (1606) a considerable legacy; and he may be presumed to have had some money with his wife, Ursula, daughter and coheir to Henry Isley, of Sandridge, in Kent; but Fletcher's father died very poor indeed. In the life of

the latter poet we have enumerated the works which proceeded from his unassisted pen. Those in which the pair concurred were—

- Philaster ; or, Love lies Bleeding. 1608.
- The Maid's Tragedy. 1609.\*
- The Knight of the Burning Pestle. 1611. A mock-heroic play, the first of its kind both as to date and merit in our language.
- A King and No King. 1611.
- Cupid's Revenge. 1612.
- The Coxcomb. 1612.
- Four Plays, or Moral Representations in one. ...
- The Scornful Lady.
- The Honest Man's Fortune. 1613.
- The Little French Lawyer.
- Wit at several Weapons.
- The Faithful Friend. Not published till 1812, and which Mr. Dyce altogether repudiates as the work of our poets.
- A Right Woman ; and
- The Laws of Candy.

It does not appear that Beaumont produced any work singly, except a few elegies, and the *Masque* celebrated at Lincoln's Inn and the Middle Temple (15 Feb. 1613) on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth with the Count Palatine. Francis Beaumont died on the 6th March, 1616, and was buried, on the 9th of that month, at the entrance of St. Benedict's Chapel, in Westminster Abbey, near the Earl of Middlesex's monument. No inscription was placed over his grave.

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### JOHN FORD.

(1586, circa 1640.)

John, the second son of Thomas Ford, or Forde, a gentleman residing at Ilsington, in Devonshire, was born in that place, April 1586. After receiving a liberal education, he was entered of the Middle Temple, Nov. 16, 1602, where he prosecuted his professional studies ; but his ambition to be ranked amongst the poets of his country appears to have been very ardent ; for in 1606, when he

\* "Beaumont and Fletcher," records Fuller, "meeting once in a tavern to continue the rude draught of a tragedy, Fletcher undertook to kill the king therein ; these words being overheard by a listener (though his loyalty not to be blamed therein), he was accused of high treason, till the mistake soon appearing that the plot was only against a dramatic and scemical king, all wound off in merriment."



was not yet one-and-twenty, he published a poem, entitled *Fame's Memorial, or the Earle of Devonshire deceased; with his honourable life, peaceful end, and solemn funeral.*

Though he did not again seek the favour of the public in print till twenty-three years after this first attempt, he had certainly produced, in the meantime, some plays on the stage. In his dedication to the Earl of Peterborough of *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, he expressly terms that tragedy "the first fruits of his leisure in the action;" and this play, though not printed till 1633, was, there is every reason to believe, acted prior to 1623. Few dramatic authors have commenced their career with a production which more strongly breathes the very soul of poetry; but few have chosen a more unfortunate subject for the display of their talents. Ford never excelled this first attempt, though he equalled it in *The Broken Heart*. At about the same period, 1623, Ford joined Rowley and Dekker in the production of *The Witch of Edmonton*, a dramatisation of the story of Mother Sawyer, a poor creature who had been just previously condemned and executed for witchcraft. This tragedy, though acted "with singular applause," remained in manuscript until 1658. Mr. Weber, the editor of Ford, assigns to Ford, in particular, the scenes between Frank, Susan, and Winnifred, in this play.

In March 1624 our poet, in conjunction with Dekker, brought upon the stage the masque of *The Sun's Darling*, which does not add much to the reputation of either. On Nov. 24, 1628, *The Lover's Melancholy* was produced at the Blackfriars Theatre. In this play Ford undertook the very difficult task of representing the symptoms and care of a deep and settled love-melancholy in one character, and of a confirmed madness in another; and he has executed the task with singular facility. *The Broken Heart*, which occurs next in the series of Ford's plays, was printed in 1633, but probably acted before that date. In point of poetical merit, it may claim an equality of praise with *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*; and when the excellence of its plot is put in comparison with the unfortunate subject of the latter, may well challenge the precedence of all the productions of our poet, who seems to have been fully aware of its merits, for he observes, in the beginning of his prologue:—

"He whose best of art  
Hath drawn this piece calls it *The Broken Heart*."

*Love's Sacrifice*, also published in 1633, though it was received well on the stage, is not entitled to the same amount of praise with *The Broken Heart*; the plot and the leading characters closely resemble those of *Othello*. Our poet's next production was an his-

torical play, *The Chronicle History of Perkin Warbeck*, apparently designed to fill up the gap between Shakespeare's *Richard III.* and his *Henry VIII.* *Perkin Warbeck* obtained no great share of popularity.

The two other remaining dramas of our author are of a very different nature from any of the preceding, being rather in the style of Fletcher's and Shirley's light and airy tragi-comedies. The comedy entitled *Fancies, Chaste and Noble* (which seems also to have been called *The Bower of Fancies*), was printed in 1638, and probably at that time had not been long upon the stage. The *Lady's Trial*, with which our poet appears to have closed his dramatic labours, may challenge comparison with many of Fletcher's comedies. It was produced at the Cockpit Theatre, in May 1638. In the dedication the play is termed "the issue of some less serious hours;" whence we may infer that the author, happily for himself, did not rely upon the stage solely, but that his profession as a lawyer occupied the principal part of his time.

Besides the plays above enumerated, Ford was the author also of four dramatic productions, never printed, and the manuscripts of which were destroyed by Warburton's servant. Their names, all that remains of them, were, *Beauty in a Trance*, tragedy; *The London Merchant*, comedy; *The Royal Combat*, comedy; *An Ill Beginning has a Good End*, comedy.

John Ford died in or about the year 1639. From a distich in a contemporary poem,

"Deep in a dump John Ford was alone gat,  
With folded arms and melancholy hat;"

and from various expressions in the dedications, prologues, and epilogues of his plays, he would appear to have been of a somewhat irritable and dissatisfied turn of mind; but he seems to have had warm friends, — Donne, Dekker, Rowley, Massinger, Shirley, and others,—who have expressed their esteem for him in commendatory verses prefixed to his various works.

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## JOHN WEBSTER.

(Circa 1585-1654.)

John Webster, one of our greatest dramatists, is also one of those writers of whom scarcely any thing is known personally. Gildon says he was clerk of St. Andrew's, Holborn, and a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company; but Mr. Dyce found no trace of his connection with the clerkship, and nothing distinctly identifying him with the company. On the Court-book of the company, indeed, searched at Mr. Dyce's instance, several John Websters occur between 1571 and 1617; but there is no particular reason for identifying any one of them with our poet. It is probable that he may have been a play-actor as well as a play-writer; but we have no specific indication of this probability. The earliest notice of Webster that Mr. Dyce has been able to discover is under the year 1602, when, in Henslowe's Diary, Webster is recorded as one of the writers of *Two Harpies*, in conjunction with Dekker, Drayton, Middleton, and Munday; and of *Lady Jane*, in two parts, in conjunction with Heywood, Chettle, and Dekker. Both these plays are now lost. In 1604 Webster made some additions to the *Malcontent* of Marston, "a work," writes Mr. Dyce, "for which he was not ill-fitted; the masculine character of his mind and style very aptly harmonising with the characteristics of his predecessor, with whom, indeed, he has many qualities in common." In 1605 were acted *Westward Ho!* and *Northward Ho!* the composition of Webster, in conjunction with Dekker; and about the same time appeared, by the same writers, *The History of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, which Mr. Dyce is inclined to regard as a refacimento of the *Lady Jane* just mentioned. In 1612 (Webster must have been doing or writing something or other for his living meanwhile, but we know not what,) appeared, in print, the *White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona*, a fearfully fine tragedy. "This *White Devil of Italy*," writes Charles Lamb, "sets off a bad cause so speciously, and pleads with such an innocence resembling boldness, that we seem to see that matchless beauty of her face which inspires such gay confidence into her, and are ready to expect, when she has done her pleadings, that her very judges, her accusers, the grave ambassadors who sit as spectators, and all the court, will rise and make proffer to defend her, in spite of the utmost conviction of her guilt." In 1613 Webster contributed his share to the expression of the public grief for the death of Prince Henry, in an elegy entitled *A Monumental Column*. In 1619 was acted *The Duchess of Malfi*, the heroine of which is one of the grandest, and at the same time most touching creations in dramatic literature. At about the same time appeared *The Devil's*

*Law Case*, a production of very unequal merit. In 1624 was published "The Monument of Honour, at the confirmation of the right worthy brother John Goare in his high office of His Majesty's Lieutenant over his Royal Chamber, at the charge and expense of the right worthy and worshipful fraternity of Merchant Taylors, invented and written by John Webster, tailor." No copy of this pageant appears to be extant. Webster's other works were, *Appius and Virginia* (1654), and *A Cure for a Cuckold* (in conjunction with Rowley). Of the former play, Mr. Dyce observes, "When I consider its simplicity, its deep pathos, its unobtrusive beauties, its singleness of plot, and the easy, unimpeded march of its story, I cannot but suspect that there are readers who will prefer this drama to any other of our author's productions." Two plays by Webster, respectively entitled *The Guise* and *A Late Murther of the Sonn upon the Mother* (the latter written in connection with Ford), are lost. John Webster is believed to have died somewhere about 1654.

There is in *Notes from Blackfryers, printed in certain Elegies done by sundrie excellent Wits, with Satyrs and Epigrams* (1620), a hit at our poet which, as illustrating his character, may be read with some interest :—

"But h'st with him crabbed Websterio,  
The play-wright, cart-wright: whether? either ho—  
No further. Looke as yee'd bee lookt into:  
Sit as ye woo'd be read: Lord, who woo'd know him?  
Was ever man so mangl'd with a poem?  
See how he draws his mouth awry of late,  
How he scrubs: wrings his wreasts; scratches his pate:  
A midwife! help! By his'braine's coitus,  
Some centaure strange: some huge Bucephalus,  
Or Pallas (sure) engendered in his braine,  
Strike Vulcan with thy hammer once againe.

This is the critick that (of all the rest)  
I'd not have view me, yet I fear him least,  
Heer's not a word cursively I have writt,  
But he'll industriously examine it;  
And in some twelve months hence (or there about)  
Let in a shamefull sheete my errors out,  
But what care I? It will be so obscure,  
That none shall understand him (I am sure)."

His character for good humour, as a critic, is here not placed in a very amiable point of view; and the passage, "in some twelve months hence," seems to allude to the labour with which he wrote; a charge, if it be such, that was not for the first time preferred against him in this work, as in the preface to *Vittoria Corombona*

(1612) he himself adverts to it : " To those who report I was a long time in finishing this tragedy, I confess I do not write with a goose-quill winged with two feathers." As to his illiberality, it must be remembered that in the same preface he bears honourable testimony to the great abilities of many of his contemporaries.

### JAMES SHIRLEY.

(1596-1666.)

James Shirley was of an ancient family, and born 13 Sept. 1596, in the parish of St. Mary Woolchurch, London. He was educated at Merchant Tailors' School, and thence removed to St. John's College, in Oxford, where Dr. Laud, then president of that college, conceived a great affection for him, on account of his excellent parts, yet would often tell him, as Mr. Wood relates, that " he was an unfit person to take the sacred function upon him, and should never have his consent," because Shirley had then a large mole upon his left cheek, which some esteemed a deformity. Afterwards, leaving Oxford without a degree, he went to Catherine Hall, Cambridge, where it is presumed he took the degrees in arts, for he soon after entered into orders, and took a cure at or near St. Alban's, in Hertfordshire. Afterwards, growing unsettled in his principles, he changed his religion for that of Rome, left his living, and became a teacher in the grammar school of St. Alban's (1623) ; but this employment being distasteful to him, he retired to London, lived in Gray's Inn, and set himself to write plays. By this he gained not only a comfortable livelihood, but also great respect and encouragement from persons of quality, especially from Henrietta Maria, King Charles I.'s queen, who made him her servant. It does not appear, however, that he turned the opportunities of advancement, which such patronage afforded, to much account. " I never," he writes, " affected the ways of flattery ; some say I have lost my preferment by not practising that court sin." Yet he needed practical patronage, for he was twice married, and had several children. In 1637 Shirley went to Dublin, where, under the special favour of the Earl of Kildare and of Lord Deputy Strafford, he occupied himself in dramatic composition for the theatre which John Ogilby had recently built in Werburgh Street, the first regular playhouse ever erected in Dublin. Shirley appears to have returned to England in or about 1639. When the rebellion broke out, Shirley, like the other dramatists of the day, enlisted himself on the side of monarchy, and being thereupon forced to leave London, and so consequently his wife and children (who afterwards, adds Wood, were



OCCLEVE PRESENTING HIS BOOK TO HENRY V.



put to their shifts), he was invited by his most noble patron, William Earl, afterwards Duke, of Newcastle, to take his fortune with him in the wars, an invitation which he readily accepted; "for that count had engaged him so much by his generous liberality towards him, that he thought he could not do a worthier act than to serve him, and so consequently his prince." Wood adds, "Shirley did much assist the Duke in the composure of certain plays which the Duke afterwards published;" and Dyce cites, in confirmation, so far, of this statement, a drinking song, which, inserted in the Duke's comedy called *The Country Captain*, is printed among our author's poems. Upon the decline of the king's cause Shirley returned to London, where, among other friends, he found Thomas Stanley, author of the *Lives of the Philosophers*, who supported him for awhile. The acting of plays being prohibited, he resumed his old occupation of teaching in Whitefriars, where he "not only gained a comfortable subsistence, but educated many ingenious youths, who afterwards proved most eminent in divers faculties." The Restoration does not appear to have ameliorated the condition of Shirley any more than it bettered that of hundreds of other deserving men, and who had merited the gratitude of royalty. "After his Majesty's return to his kingdom," writes Wood, "several of his plays which he before had made were acted with good applause; but what office or employment he had conferred upon him, after all his sufferings, I cannot justly tell." The fact is, that he received no office or employment at all; and having, in 1659, in publishing his *Honoriam and Mammon*, declared, "it is now made public to satisfy the importunity of my friends; I will only add, it is likely to be the last, for, in my resolve, nothing of this nature shall after this engage either my pen or invention." He adhered to this resolution, and continued to earn a livelihood by teaching his little school; while a degenerate race of playwrights arose to delight with bombast and obscenity a tasteless and licentious age. "Our author," proceeds Wood, "was a drudge for John Ogilby in his translation of Homer's *Iliads and Odyssees*, and some of Virgil's works into English verse, with the writing of annotations on them. At length, after Shirley had lived in various conditions, and had seen much of the world, he, with his second wife Frances, were driven by the dismal conflagration that happened in London, an. 1666, from their habitation near to Fleet Street, into the parish of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, in Middlesex, where being in a manner overcome with affrightments, disconsolations, and other miseries, occasioned by that fire and their losses, they both died within the compass of a natural day; whereupon their bodies were buried in one grave in the yard belonging to the said church of St.



Giles's, on 29th October, 1666." To the blameless tenour of his life, adds Mr. Dyce, there is abundant contemporary testimony: gentle, modest, and full of sensibility, he seems to have conciliated the affection of all his associates. His orphan children were most probably thrown destitute on the world. The situation of butler in Furnival's Inn was occupied by one of his sons in Wood's time.

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### ROBERT DAVENPORT.

(Born circa 1595.)

Robert Davenport, a dramatic poet of the reigns of James I. and Charles I., seems, from a passage in one of his productions, to have spent some time at sea; and this is all we know of his personal history. As a writer, he made his appearance in 1624, when, on the 10th April, he had license given him for his play, *The Historie of Henry the First*. On the 24th October, of the same year, his *City Night Cap*, or *Crede quod habes et habes*, a tragedy, was licensed for the Cockpit Theatre. In 1625 he published two poems of a very grave caste, the one entitled *A Crown for a Conqueror*, from Rev. xx., the other, "*Too late to call backe Yesterday, and To-morrow comes not yet.*" The words fancied in a dialogue, supposed between a lover and the day." Next appeared "a pleasant and witty comedy called a *New Tricke to cheat the Devil*" (1639), a production of very great merit. Before 1651 he produced another play, *The Pirate*; in 1655 was printed (it had been acted for some years previously,) "*King John and Matilda*, a tragedy, as it was acted with great applause by her Majestie's servants at the Cockpit in Drury Lane." This play was published by Andrew Pennycuicke, one of the performers, who tells us that he was the last male actor who performed the part of Matilda, women actors having been introduced upon the stage about the date when the play was first performed. Davenport is also stated to have been the author of the following plays:

The Fatal Brothers.

The Politic Queen.

The Pedlar.

Henry II.

And, in conjunction with Thomas Drue, *The Woman's Mistaken*.

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## THOMAS STORER.

(Died 1604.)

It was the observant remark of the antiquary Hearne, that our poets of earlier times, for the most part, kept close to truth, and did not think it for their credit and reputation to corrupt matter of fact with the additions of fancy and fable. It is for that reason, he adds, that Storer's book of the *Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey*, written in English verse, and printed at London in 1599, was much esteemed and cried up. Oldys, in his catalogue of the Harleian Miscellany pamphlets, concurs in this sentiment of Hearne. The author of the book thus commended, Thomas Storer, was the son of John Storer, a Londoner, and was elected a student of Christchurch, Oxford, in 1587. He completed the degree of M.A. in 1594; at which time, says Wood, he was had in great renown for his most excellent vein in poesy, not only expressed in verses printed in several books made occasionally by the members of the University, but for that written in English verse, entitled *The Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinall*. He died at London, in November 1604. Most of the biographical incidents selected by Storer for this, his *magnum opus*, accord with Cavendish's prose life of the great cardinal. The value of the poem, therefore, which is praised for its elegant verse by Bishop Nicholson, is heightened by its fidelity as an historical record. Malone was of opinion that the work might have suggested a subject to Shakespeare for his play of *Henry the Eighth*.

## ELIZABETH MELVILL.

(Born circa 1570.)

This poetess, who enjoyed the courtesy title of Lady Culross, and who is extolled by Alexander Hume as a most successful cultivator of sacred poetry, is the authoress of "*Ane Godlie Dream, compylit in Scottish Meter*, by M (rs.) M (elvill), gentelwoman in Culross. Edinb. 1603." A later edition bears this title, "*A Godly Dream*, by Elizabeth Melvill, Lady Culross, younger, at the request of a special friend. Aberdeen, imprinted by E. Raban, laird of letters, 1644."

## ALEXANDER CRAIG.

(Born circa 1570.)

Alexander Craig, of "Rose Craig, Scoto-Britain," is the author of *Poetical Essayes*, published in London, 1604; and of another volume (if not the same under a different title,) called *The Poeticall Recreations of Mr. Alexander Craig*, published at Aberdeen, 1623.

## SAMUEL ROWLANDS.

(Born circa 1570.)

Samuel Rowlands was a prolific writer at the end of the sixteenth and the early part of the seventeenth century. His first production (1598) was a collection of sacred poems, entitled *The Betraying of Christ, Judas in Despaire, &c.*; but finding that humorous pieces, more suited to the bent of his own mind, were also more saleable, he proceeded to satirise. Who or what he himself was does not appear; but his Muse is seldom found in good company. His best characters are generally picked up by the wayside, among the idle and vicious; sometimes on benches of tippling-houses, and too often in the precincts of Bridewell, or from the crowd that usually waited upon a delinquent wearing "Tyburne-tiffanie." The chief interest of Rowlands' books consists in their minute description of place and character, which may be considered as a faithful, if not a flattering copy of the times in which he flourished.

The first of these, writes Rimbault, *The Knave of Clubs*, 'tis merry when Knaves meet, upon its appearance in 1600 gave such offence, on account of the severity of its satire and the obviousness of its allusions, that an order was made by the government that it should be burned, first publicly, as containing matters "unfyt to be published," and then in the Stationers' hall kitchen, "with other popish bookes and things that were lately taken." Another of the author's works, *The letting Humor's Blood in the Head-vayne, with a new Morrisco daunced by Seven Satyrs upon the Bottom of Diogenes' Table*, was included in the same proscription. In accordance with a promise given at the end of *The Knave of Clubs*, Rowlands, in 1612, gave to the world *The Knave of Harts*, *Haile Felowe, well met!* *More Knaves yet*, *The Knaves of Spades and Diamonds*, followed soon after; and by way of complement came *A Paire of Spy Knaves*. One of Rowlands' best pieces was a

cynical view of London, its men and its manners in 1600, entitled *Diogenes' Lanthorne*.

" In Athens I seeke for honest men,  
But I shall find them God knowes when :  
I'll searche the citie, where if I can see  
An honest man, he shall goe with me."

As in all such publications, each man sees his neighbour in the glass, and is delighted accordingly at the show-up. These satires went through many editions, yet all Rowlands' productions have become very rare.

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SIR JOHN DAVIES.

(Born circa 1570, died 1626.)

This poet was the third son of John Davies, of Westbury, in Wiltshire, formerly of New Inn, and afterwards a practitioner of law in his native place.

When not fifteen, he was sent to Oxford, (1585,) where he was admitted a commoner of Queen's College, and prosecuted his studies with perseverance and success. About the beginning of 1588 he removed to the Middle Temple, but returned to Oxford in 1590, and took the degree of B.A. At the Temple, while he did not neglect the study of the law, he rendered himself obnoxious to the discipline of the place by various youthful irregularities; and after being fined, was at last removed from commons. Notwithstanding, he was called to the bar in 1595; but was again so indiscreet as to forfeit his privileges by a quarrel with Mr. Richard Martin, whom he beat in the Temple Hall. For this offence, he was, in February 1598, expelled the society.

After this affair, our poet returned to Oxford, where he wrote his poem on *The Immortality of the Soul*, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, and which procured for him a high distinction among the writers of his time. Whether Elizabeth bestowed any marks of her favour does not appear. He knew, however, her love of flattery, and wrote twenty-six acrostic hymns on the words, Elizabeth Regina, which are certainly the best of their kind.

When the queen was to be entertained by Mr. Secretary Cecil, our poet, by desire, contributed his share in *A Conference between a Gentleman Usher and a Poet*, a dramatic entertainment, which does not add much to his reputation. His progress from being the *Terræ*

*Illius* of a court to a seat in Parliament is not known, but we find that he was chosen a member in the Parliament which met on the 27th of October, 1601. He appears to have commenced his political career with spirit and intelligence, by opposing monopolies, which were at that time too frequently granted, and strenuously supporting the privileges of the house, for which the queen had not the greatest respect.

In consequence of the figure he now made, and after suitable apologies, he was restored, in Trinity Term 1601, to his former rank in the Temple. Lord Chancellor Ellesmere appears to have stood his friend on this occasion; and Davies continued to advance in his profession, until the accession of James I. opened new prospects. Having gone with Lord Hunsdon to Scotland, to congratulate the new king, the latter finding that he was the author of the popular poem *Nosce Teipsum*, embraced him, as a mark of his friendship.

In 1603 he was sent as solicitor-general to Ireland, and immediately rose to be attorney-general. Being afterwards appointed one of the judges of assize, he conducted himself with much prudence and humanity. He received the honour of knighthood in 1607.

In 1608 he was sent to England with the chief-justice, in order to represent to King James the effects which the establishment of public peace, and the progress of the law had produced since the commencement of his majesty's reign. His reception on such an occasion could not but be favourable. As his residence in Ireland afforded him many opportunities to study the history and genius of the people, he published the result of his inquiries in 1612, under the title of *A Discovery of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued, &c.* Soon after he was elected representative for the county of Fermanagh, the first it had ever chosen; and after a very violent struggle between the Roman Catholic and Protestant members, was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons.

In 1615 he published Reports of cases adjudged in the King's Court in Ireland, the first reports of Irish judgments that had ever been made public. In 1620 we find him sitting in the English Parliament for Newcastle-under-Line.

Amidst these employments he found leisure to republish his *Nosce Teipsum* in 1622, with his acrostics, and *Orchestra*, a poem on the antiquity and excellency of dancing, originally published in 1596. Sir John Davies died suddenly, of an apoplexy, in the night of the 7th of December, 1626.

## BARTHOLOMEW GRIFFIN.

(Born circa 1570.)

"B. Griffin, Gent.," is known to us as the author of *Fidessa, More Chaste than Kinde*, a volume of amatory sonnets, printed at London, "by the Widdow Orwin, for Matthew Lownes, 1596." Who B. Griffin may have been in the flesh remains altogether unascertained. The editor of the reprint of his poems mentions a Bartholomew Griffin, of Biddeford, who, on the 3d April, 1582, obtained a license from John Bishop of Worcester, "to eat meat during Lent, and other fasts, so long as his indisposition continued." This, it is suggested, may have been perhaps the father of our poet. Besides the rarity of *Fidessa*, which partially occasioned its reprint in 1815, and besides its intrinsic merits, the volume is of interest to the poetical student, on account of a very striking resemblance between Griffin's third sonnet and one of Shakespeare's in the *Passionate Pilgrim*. How close is the resemblance may be sufficiently gathered from the first four lines of each; Shakespeare's runs thus:—

"Fair Venus, with Adonis sitting by her  
Under a myrtle shade, began to woo him;  
She told the youngling how God Mars did try her,  
And as he fell to her, she fell to him."

Griffin's lines are these:—

"Venus, and young Adonis sitting by her  
Under a myrtle shade, began to woo him;  
She told the youngling how God Mars did try her,  
And as he fell to her, so fell she to him."

Whether Shakespeare stole the sonnet from Griffin, or Griffin from Shakespeare, is a question of dates; and at present the dates are against Shakespeare, the first known edition of the *Passionate Pilgrim* being in the year 1599, whereas *Fidessa* was published in 1596.

## RICHARD BARNFIELD.

(Born circa 1570.)

Richard Barnfield, a graduate of Oxford, has been chiefly remembered perhaps by his elegant pieces, printed in the *Passionate Pilgrim*, and which have even been attributed by some to Shakespeare. His first production was,

The Affectionate Shepheard; or, the Complaint of Daphnis for the love of Ganymede.

The volume contains:

The Teares of an Affectionate Shepheard.

Sicke for Love.

The Second Day's Lamentation of the Affectionate Shepheard.

The Shepheard's Content; or, the Happiness of a Harmless Life.

The Complaint of Chastitie.

Hellen's Rape; or, a Light Lanthorne for Light Ladies.

In this *Complaint of Daphnis*, which, in an apologetic preface to the second edition, the author says, is "nothing else but an imitation of Virgill, in the second eclogue of Alexis," the author, through the course of twenty sonnets, in English hexameters, not inelegant in themselves, and which were exceedingly popular at the time, bewails his unsuccessful love for a beautiful youth, named Ganymede, in a strain of the most tender passion, yet with professions of the chastest affection. The "second fruit" of the author was *Cynthia*, "with certaine sonnets," and the *Legend of Cassandra* (1591). In the preface the poet hopes the reader will bear with his rude conceit of *Cynthia*, "if for no other cause, yet for that it is the *first imitation* of the verse of that excellent poet, Maister Spenser, in his *Fayrie Queene*." He alludes again to Spenser in his twentieth sonnet, as "Great Colin, the chief of Shepheardes;" while he designates Drayton under the name of "*gentle Rowland*, his professed friend."

In the preface to a new edition of *Cynthia*, published in 1595, Barnfield mentions that he had been "thought of some to have been the author of *two* books heretofore;" but the only productions which he recognises at that time are those above described. It is hence clear, as Mr. Collier observes, in his most interesting *Annals of the Stage*, that the work entitled *Greene's Funeral* has been erroneously ascribed to our poet. In 1598 he published:

The Encomium of Lady Pecunia; or, the Praise of Money.

The Complaint of Poetry for the Death of Liberality.

The Combat between Conscience and Covetousness in the Minde of Man.

And, Poems in divers Humours.

These pieces, it seems, he was encouraged to offer to the courtesy of the reader through the gentle acceptance of his *Cynthia*. The following verses from this production may be quoted, both as a sample of the writer's style, and from their object. After praising Spenser, Daniel, and Drayton, Barnfield thus proceeds:

" And Shakespeare then, whose hony-flowing vaine,  
 (Pleasing the world) thy praises doth obtaine ;  
 Whose Venus and whose Lucrece (sweete and chaste)  
 My name in fame's immortal booke hath plact,  
 Live ever you, at least in fame live ever :  
 Well may the bodye dye, but fame dyes never."

## THOMAS CHURCHYARD.

(1520-1604.)

Thomas Churchyard was born at Shrewsbury in 1520, "of gentle race," he tells us, "and wanting wealth alone." He studied for a short while at Oxford ; but at the early age of 17, "with heels as restless as his head," went forth into the world to seek his fortune. He went to court, laid aside his books, and so long as his money lasted, was a *roister*. He then obtained some position in the household of the Earl of Surrey, with whom he remained between three and four years, applying himself to books, to music, and to the Muse, writing at this time the many things he reclaims in Surrey's *Miscellany* (1557). In 1542 we find him "trailing a pike" in the Low Countries, as a soldier in the army which Henry VIII. sent to assist the Emperor against Francis I. At the peace of Crepi, in 1544, he returned home, but was soon marched with the English troops into Scotland, and took part in the battle of Pinkie. In the following campaign, Churchyard was one of the English soldiers who were made prisoners by the Scots at Saint Menance. After making himself, for a time, very comfortable in his captivity, and, according to his own account, being agreeable to his captors, he returned, with the return of peace (1550), to England, where he forthwith involved himself in a literary contest with one Camel, concerning a poem which, among others, our author sent forth at this period, called *David Dicar's Dream*. The lucubration was also regarded with an evil eye by the Privy Council, who would have sent Churchyard to the pillory, but that he had a patron in the Duke of Somerset.

Our poet's next military service was in Ireland, whence he returned (1552), and made unsuccessful suit to widow Browning at Shrewsbury. Her refusal, he tells us, "troubled him in his mind ; he broke his lute, forswore the Muse, and would henceforth seek solace only in war." Accordingly, Churchyard *fared* to Metz, and *trailed a pike* once more under the Emperor against Francis I. : he returned to England after three years campaigning, and, at once to appease his restlessness and to make merry, took pen in hand in



place of pike ; and his publications at this time were, a *New Year's Gift to all England*, treating of rebellion, and the *Golden Hut*, dedicated to Queen Mary. He had soon to dedicate his service to this sombre sovereign in another way, serving as a lieutenant in her unlucky war against France. At the capitulation of Guines he acted as the medium between the besieged and the French, being selected thereto for his knowledge of French, his plausible tongue, and his stout heart. When he returned once more to England, he found all his friends decayed, his father dead, the household broken up ; and his own purse being empty, he addressed a poetical appeal to Queen Elizabeth, from whom he got nothing but a few "gracious words." It was at this period that he wrote the tragedie of *Lord Monbray*, which forms part of the *Mirroure for Magistrates*.

He was at the siege of Leith in the spring of 1560, but came back to London in the autumn of that year as poor as he went. He next tried his luck at court, but fruitlessly ; so penning a *Farewell to Court*, he fought a campaign in Ireland under Sir Henry Sidney. Thence he "trudged to Antwerp, to get more spending pence," where we find him placed by a body of 30,000 religious insurgents at their head ; and, according to his own account, exerting himself to save the land "from oruel sword and fire." His moderation, however, got him into trouble with his men, and he with difficulty made his escape in priest's attire. He returned next year (1567) to the Netherlands as a sort of agent for Lord Oxford, to observe the progress of the war of Independence. After various hardships, he returned in 1569 to England ; and being in utter distress, married a wife who turned out a shrew, but who, fortunately, brought no children to aggravate their poverty. While residing at Bath, at this time, he produced *A Discourse of Rebellion*, drawn forth for to warn the wanton writers how to keep their heads on their shoulders ; and he warned Cecil of some conspiracy proceeding among the Papists, as we learn from Strype, who speaks of Churchyard as an excellent soldier and poet, and a man of honest principles. After several years further campaigning in the Netherlands, Churchyard, at the age of 52, hung up his coralet, and for the remaining thirty years of his life, subsisted by the labours of his pen. He had previously published *The First Part of Churchyard's Chippes*, reminiscences of Scotland in prose and verse ; *The Lamentation of Churchyard's Friendship*, and sundry other performances ; then, in 1574, he composed the pageant with which the queen was entertained on her royal progress at Bristol, and the published booke of which was dedicated to his patron, Christopher Hatton, then captain of the Queen's Guard. Next, from personal observation, he drew up *A lamentable and pitiful Description of the Woeful Wars in Flanders since the four*

*last years of the Emperor Charles the Fifth his reign.* In 1578 Churchyard went to Norwich, and employed his creative genius in the production of the show with which the corporation entertained the queen on her visit to that ancient city. In the same year he published a translation of the first three books of Ovid *de Tristibus*.

An unlucky passage in his next publication (*Churchyard's Chase*) gave offence at court; and he had, perhaps nothing loth, to abscond into Scotland where, however, he seems to have been employed by Elizabeth's agents to mollify the Scottish monarch towards the Earl of Morton. He stayed in Scotland long enough to witness the execution of the earl, whose *tragedie* forms a portion of the contents of *Churchyard's Challenge* (1593). In 1580 our author sent forth six compositions of various sorts and sizes, elaborately described in Mr. Chalmers' edition of the *Chips concerning Scotland*; and so, from year to year, he laboured on, struggling with poverty, till, in 1593, the queen settled a pension on him. In that year appeared *Churchyard's Challenge*, a volume containing twenty-two treatises in prose and verse; and a *Pleasant Concert*, a poetical new year's offering of thanks to the queen.

Churchyard may be said to have died with the pen in his hand, for his *Blessed Balm to search and salve Sedition* appeared in 1604, just before his departure from the world wherein he had so long been floundering, which occurred in March or April of that year.

His writings, which extend to nearly 70 volumes, great and small, and upon all sorts of subjects, in prose and in verse, occupy, in their bare enumeration, eighteen pages of Mr. Chalmers' publication above referred to.

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#### SIR JOHN HARINGTON.

(Circa 1570-1630.)

Sir John Harington, of Exton, in the county of Rutland, knight; of Burleigh, in the same county; of Combe, in Warwickshire; of Boston, in Leicestershire; and of Kelston, Somersetshire, was the son of John Harington, who was imprisoned by Queen Mary for holding a correspondence with the Princess Elizabeth on political and religious matters. He was born about the year 1570 at Kelston, near Bath, and had Queen Elizabeth for his godmother, in whose esteem, as well on account of his own as of his father's merit, he always stood very high. He received his earlier education at Eton, whence he removed to Cambridge, where he took an M.A. degree. By King James he was created a Knight of the Bath; and, being a courtier, he presented

a manuscript to Prince Henry, levelled chiefly against the married bishops, which was intended only for the private use of the prince; but being published afterwards, created a great clamour, and made several of the clergy say that his conduct was of a piece with his doctrines, since he, together with Robert Earl of Leicester, supported Sir Walter Raleigh in his suit to Queen Elizabeth for the manor of Banwell, belonging to the Bishopric of Bath and Wells, on a presumption that the right rev. incumbent had incurred a præmunire, by marrying a second wife. Wood's account of it is this: "That Sir John Harington, being minded to obtain the favour of Prince Henry, wrote a discourse for his private use, intituled: *A Brief View of the State of the Church of England as it stood in Queen Elizabeth's and King James' reign, to the year 1608*. This book is no more than a character and history of the bishops of those times, and was written to the said Prince Henry as an additional supply to the catalogue of bishops of Dr. Francis Godwin, upon occasion of that proverb,

' Henry the Eighth pulled down monks and their cells;  
Henry the Ninth shall pull down bishops and their bells.'

In the said book the author Harington doth, by imitating his god-mother Queen Elizabeth, show himself a great enemy to married bishops, especially to such as had been married twice; and many things therein are said of them that were by no means fit to be published, being written only for private use. But so it was, that the book coming into the hands of one John Chetwind, grandson by a daughter to the author, he, a person deeply principled in Presbyterian tenets, did, when the press was open, print it at London in 1653; and no sooner it was published and came into the hands of many, but it was exceedingly clamoured at by the loyal and orthodox clergy condemning him that published it."

The precise period of Sir John Harington's death is not known, but it is conjectured to have been about the year 1630. His claim to a niche in the series of poets is founded upon his fine translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, a version in the true spirit of the original, and upon various Epigrams. As a prose writer he produced "A new discourse of a stale subject, called the Metamorphosis of Ajax, written by Misacmos, to his friend and cousin Philostippos" (1596); the *Anatomy of the Metamorphosed Ajax*, *An Apology* for the same, and *Ulysses upon Ajax*, written by Misodraboles to his friend Philaretus (1596).

These tracts are perhaps the first specimens of the Rabelaisian satire our language has to boast. They are replete with that kind of humour which distinguishes the writings of the French Lucan, and

partake of their grossness. The extreme rarity of these once popular trifles renders it doubtful whether Swift or Sterne were acquainted with them; yet there are passages in the works of both these eccentric writers so strongly resembling some parts of Harington's, as almost to induce a suspicion that they had seen them; this resemblance, however, may have arisen from the circumstance of their being, like our author, imitators of Rabelais, and the other early French writers of facetiæ.

Of the *Metamorphoses of Ajax*, the avowed purport is the description of a closet which Sir John Harington had invented and erected at Kelston; but he has contrived to make it the vehicle of much diverting matter, evincing his extensive reading; he has also interspersed numerous satiric touches and allusions to contemporary persons and events, many of which are now necessarily obscure, and which were, no doubt, one of the causes of its great popularity at the time of publication.

Elizabeth, however she might be diverted with the humour of this whimsical performance, is said to have conceived much disquiet on being told the author had aimed a shaft at Leicester. Its satiric tendency procured the writer many enemies; and it is supposed that he owed his good fortune in escaping a Star Chamber suit to the favour of the queen, who yet affected to be much displeased, and forbade him the court in consequence.

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#### RICHARD JOHNSON.

(1570-1630.)

Richard Johnson, born, it is not known where, in or about the year 1570, made his first appearance in print in 1592, when he published a poem called *Nine Worthies of London; explaining the honourable exercise of Armes, the Vertues of the Valiant, and the Memorable Attempts of Magnanimous Minds*, 4to. It is probable that about the same time he wrote and printed in broadsides many of the ballads that he afterwards published collectively; for in Kemp's *Nine Daies Wonder*, printed 1600, there is apparently an allusion to him as the "ballad-maker, whom his kinsman Jansonius sought out," and whom Kemp "humbly requests not to fill the country with lyes of his never done actes, as he did in his late morrice to Norwich." The *Famous Historie of the Seven Champions of Christendom*, a work containing some of the most capital fictions of old Arabian romance, was produced by Johnson in 1596, and at once took its rank among

the most popular stories of the time. The death of Queen Elizabeth was lamented by Johnson in a judicious production, entitled *Anglorum Lacrymæ, in a sad Passion, compleyming the Death of Queene Elizabeth, yet comforted againe by the vertuous hopes of King James*. In 1607 he published *The Pleasant Walkes of Moorefields*, 4to; in 1612, *A Remembrance of the Honours done to the Life of Robert (Cecill) Earle of Salisbury*; and in the same year a collection of his ballads, under the title of *The Crowne Garlande of Goulden Roses, gathered out of England's Royall Garden. Being the Lives and Strange Fortunes of many Great Personages of this Land, set forth in many pleasant new Songs and Sonnets never before imprinted*. The work has been frequently reprinted, each time receiving "new additions," the latest impression being that sent forth by the Percy Society, under the able editorial care of Mr. Chappell. Richard Johnson was the author also of the *Historie of Tom à Lincolne*, and of *Dainty Conceits*, a collection printed in the year 1630; soon after which date Johnson is supposed to have died.

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#### DR. JOHN DONNE.

(1572-1631.)

Dr. John Donne, the son of an eminent merchant, was born in London in the year 1572, by his father descended from an ancient and worthy family in Wales, and by his mother from the famous and learned Sir Thomas More.

The first part of his education was under a private tutor in his father's house; from whence, in the tenth year of his age, he was removed to Hart Hall, in Oxford, having already given many proofs of his great parts and abilities. Here he continued for the space of four years, with an unwearied application to the study of the several sciences. In his fourteenth year he was by his friends transplanted to Trinity College, Cambridge; and thence, after three years' stay, to Lincoln's Inn, in which honourable society he soon gained much esteem and reputation.

About this time his studies were interrupted by the death of an indulgent father. Being by this accident in a manner left to himself, and enabled withall by a handsome fortune of three thousand pounds (a sum in those days very considerable) to improve himself in what manner he pleased, he thought he could not do it better than by travel. Accordingly, he attended the Earl of Essex in the expedition to Cadiz; and afterwards taking the tour of Spain and Italy, and making himself a thorough master of their languages, he was, at

his return into England, promoted to be chief secretary to the then Lord Chancellor Ellesmere.

It was here he fell passionately in love with and privately married a niece of the Lady Ellesmere, the daughter of Sir George Moor, Chancellor of the Garter and Lieutenant of the Tower; which so enraged Sir George, that he not only procured Mr. Donne's dismissal from his employment under the lord chancellor, but never rested till he had caused him likewise to be imprisoned.

Though it was not long before he was enlarged from his confinement, yet his troubles still increased upon him; for his wife being detained from him, he was constrained to claim her by a troublesome and expensive lawsuit, which, together with travel, books, and a too liberal disposition, contributed to reduce his fortune to a very narrow compass.

Adversity has its peculiar virtues to exercise and work upon, as well as the most flourishing condition of life; and Mr. Donne had now an opportunity of showing his patience and submission, which, together with the general approbation he every where met with of Mr. Donne's good qualities, with an irresistible kind of persuasion, so won upon Sir George, that he began now not wholly to disapprove of his daughter's choice; and was at length so far reconciled as not to deny them his blessing, though he could not yet be prevailed upon to lend them his assisting hand towards their support.

In the midst of these misfortunes he was happily relieved by his generous kinsman Sir Francis Woolley, of Pirford, in Surrey, who entertained both him and his wife at his house for many years with much freedom, and as his family increased (for he had every year a child), proportionably enlarged his bounty. Here they continued till Sir Francis's death; some time before which the good knight had laboured and so far effected a reconciliation with their father Sir George, as to engage him, under a bond, to pay to Mr. Donne eight hundred pounds, or twenty pounds quarterly till it was paid, as a portion with his daughter.

Mr. Donne, notwithstanding the many perplexities he was now involved in, was not hereby diverted from his beloved studies; for during his stay with Sir Francis he made himself perfectly acquainted with the body of civil and canon laws.

Upon the loss of his worthy benefactor, he hired a house at Mitcham for his wife and family, placing them near some friends whose bounty he had often experienced, but took lodgings for himself in London, where his occasions often required him. The reader will be best able to judge the necessitous state Mr. Donne was now in from an extract of one of his letters to a friend, which, whoever can read

without being sensibly affected, must have retained but little of compassion or common humanity :

“ The reason why I did not send an answer to your last week’s letter was because it found me in too great a sadness, and at present it is thus with me : there is not one person but myself well in my family ; I have already lost half a child, and with that mischance of hers my wife is fallen into such a discomposure as would afflict her too extremely, but that the sickness of all her children stupifies her, of one of which, in good faith, I have not much hope ; and these meet with a fortune so ill provided for physic and such relief, that if God should ease us with burials, I know not how to perform even that. But I flatter myself with this hope, that I am dying too ; for I cannot waste faster than by such griefs.

“ From my Hospital at Mitcham,

“ JOHN DONNE.”

The only alleviation of these sorrows was his having recourse to books, particularly his studying, with much pains and labour, the controversy between the Reformed and Roman Churches (which before he had been no stranger to, having at the age of nineteen carefully examined the works of Bellarmin and other famous writers of that time), especially the two points, then so remarkably controverted, of supremacy and allegiance.

And now, after this gloomy season of affliction, did the dawn of some better fortune begin to appear ; for, upon the advice of some of his friends, he removed himself and his family from Mitcham to London ; and there, by Sir Robert Drury, was placed rent free in a handsome house next his own in Drury Lane. He had heretofore been well known to and much valued by many of the nobility, by some of whom he was now introduced and recommended to the king. His majesty needed not much solicitation on his behalf, himself soon taking great delight in his company, insomuch that one day having talked with him on the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, he was much pleased with his discourse, and commanded him to draw up into some form the arguments and objections that he had brought upon those points with his answers thereto. This he soon did, and delivered them to the king in the same order they are now printed in his *Pseudo-Martyr*.

The king, upon reading this book of Mr. Donne’s, was so struck with admiration of his learning and abilities, that he immediately denoted him to the ministry, and from that time with much earnestness persuaded him to take holy orders. It is here to be remembered that, some time before this, Dr. Morton, (afterwards Bishop of Dur-

ham), upon his being made Dean of Gloucester, had, with the same pious intentions, solicited him to enter upon that sacred function, promising him to deliver up to him a very valuable benefice which he was then possessed of; but through Mr. Donne's excessive modesty (though his circumstances were then at the lowest), he declined this offer. But to his majesty's commands Mr. Donne (though not without some unwillingness) did consent; at the same time requesting he might be allowed to defer it till he had made some further advances in the study of divinity and the learned languages.

This being granted, at the end of three years he was, by his learned friend Dr. King, bishop of London, ordained with all convenient speed both deacon and priest; upon which the king immediately made him one of his chaplains; and not long after this, the king being at Cambridge, the University, in obedience to his majesty's command, conferred upon Mr. Donne the degree of doctor of divinity.

The lectureship of Lincoln's Inn about this time happening to be vacant, the benchers presently made choice of their old fellow-student, Dr. Donne, to be their preacher, provided him with handsome apartments, and expressed their affection to him by sundry other acts of liberality and kindness.

In this society he continued three years, till the king sending over the Earl of Doncaster into Germany to compose the unhappy business of the Palgrave, was likewise pleased to appoint the Doctor his assistant in that important affair.

Within a year after his return into England, the deanery of St. Paul's becoming vacant by the removal of Dr. Carey to the see of Exeter, the king ordered him to attend him at dinner next day. When his majesty was sat down, he said with his usual pleasantness: "Dr. Donne, I have invited you to dinner; and though you sit not down with me, I will carve to you of a dish I know you love well; for knowing you love London, I do therefore make you Dean of St. Paul's. And when I have dined, then take your beloved dish home to your study; say grace there to yourself, and much good may it do you." So much did the king esteem Dr. Donne, that when he had been speaking of him, he was heard more than once to say, "I always rejoice when I think that by my means he became a divine."

Not long afterwards he was presented by the Earl of Dorset with the vicarage of St. Dunstan's in the West, and by the Earl of Kent with another benefice; and in the next parliament was chosen procurator of the Convocation. In his fifty-fourth year he fell into a lingering consumption, from which for a time rallying, in his thankfulness to God, he sent forth his admirable *Book of Devotions*. He



relapsed; however, and growing weaker and weaker, sent forth, on the 31st March, 1631, his last breath, with the words, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done!" His poems, chiefly religious, are, many of them, of a very singular character, both in composition and in imagery; but they occasionally display great vigour of thought, and always earnest piety.

### FRANCIS DAVISON.

(1575-1618.)

Francis Davison, the eldest son of Secretary Davison, was born in or about the year 1575. In 1593 he became a member of Gray's Inn, and in 1594 produced his first work, *The Speech of Gray's Inn Masque, consisting of three parts: the Story of Proteus' Transformations; the Wonders of the Adamantine Rock; and a Speech to her Majesty*. The author himself took part in the performance of the masque. In May 1595, he proceeded with his tutor, Mr. Edward Smith, on the grand tour; and several letters to and from him during his absence have been printed by Sir Harris Nicolas, in his valuable edition of the *Poetical Rhapsody* (Pickering, 1826), as affording some curious information on the period in which our author lived. Upon his return to England, in 1597, he appears to have experienced the favour of the Russell family, his connexion with which doubtless occasioned the defence which, in 1600, he wrote of the marriage of Lady Elizabeth Russell with William Bourchier, third Earl of Bath; the legality of which was contested by Mary, daughter of Sir T. Cornwallis, on the ground of an alleged prior marriage with herself. In this work Davison speaks of the Russell family as "one to which myself am specially obliged, and have always vowed my poor duty and service." The extent of the patronage conferred does not appear. In 1602 appeared the first edition of "*A Poetical Rhapsody; containing divers Sonnets, Odes, Elegies, Madrigals, Epigrams, Pastorals, Eclogues, with other poems, both in rhyme and measured verse, for variety and pleasure the like never yet published* :

'The bee and spider, by a diverse power,  
Suck honey and poison from the selfsame flower.'

"Being induced," writes Davison in the preface, "by some private reasons, and by the instant entreaty of special friends, to suffer some of my worthless poems to be published, I desired to make some written by my dear friends *Anonymoi*, and my dearer brother, to bear them company; both without their consent, the latter being in the

Low Country wars, and the rest utterly ignorant thereof." The dear friends whom Davison desired to remain *Anonymoi*, but whom the printer of the book made for the most part known, were Charles Best, Thomas Campion, Henry Constable, Sir John Davis, John Donne, Robert Greene, Mary Countess of Pembroke, Sir Walter Raleigh, Thomas Spelman, Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, Joshua Sylvester, Thomas Watson. An anonymous *W. A.* alone remains unidentified. Later in the preface the writer announces his intention of soon publishing a work of more importance. This work has never appeared, the *Rhapsody* being Davison's only printed production; but Sir Harris Nicolas seems to identify it with a manuscript of our author's in the British Museum, containing a great number of notes for "A Relation of England," on a very comprehensive scale. Our author is believed to have died before 1619, and poor; the only means he is at all ascertained to have possessed being an annuity of 100*l.* bequeathed to him in 1608 by his unfortunate father, who, dying much involved, had nothing to leave his children but a portion of the profits of the office of *Custos Brevium* of the King's Bench, which, under better fortune, had been assigned to him and to his children.

His poetical works, part of which, as he himself intimates, were written before he was twenty, may, notwithstanding, be fairly ranked high in their class. "In them," writes Sir Egerton Brydges, "a flight of native beauty, a felicitous combination of simple, elegant, and energetic words, frequently catch the ear, and convey a sudden thrill of sympathy and admiration to the heart." "His translations of the Psalms," adds Sir Harris Nicolas, "are not only the happiest of his efforts, but they have strong pretensions to be placed amongst the best versions of the inspired monarch which have ever appeared."

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### CHRISTOPHER DAVISON.

(Born circa 1577.)

Christopher Davison, the second son of Secretary Danson, is known as a poet only by some translations of the Psalms, printed by Sir Harris Nicolas in his edition of Francis Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody*. Like his brother Francis, he was admitted of Gray's Inn (1597); but nothing further is known about him until his father's death, in 1608, when, according to the secretary's will, he was appointed to execute the office of *Custos Brevium* of the King's Bench, paying to his brothers certain proportions of the emoluments. What became of him after this does not appear.

## JOHN CHALKHILL.

(Born circa 1575.)

John Chalkhill is said by Izaak Walton, in his preface to the pastoral romance entitled *Thealma and Clearchus*, to have been the author of that poem. He further describes John Chalkhill to have been "an acquaintant and friend of Edmund Spenser, a man in his time generally known and as well beloved; for he was humble and obliging in his behaviour, a gentleman, a scholar, very innocent and prudent, and indeed, in his whole life, useful, quiet, and virtuous." Mr. Singer, the accomplished critic, who, among many other valuable resuscitations, has reprinted *Thealma and Clearchus*, conceives that as Walton, so admirable a biographer, had been silent upon the life of Chalkhill, there had, in point of fact, never been any such person, and that the real author of the poem was Izaak Walton himself. Sir Egerton Brydges, as the result of an elaborate examination of the question in the *Retrospective Review*, comes to the same opinion. Sir John Hawkins adduces, *à contra*, the fact, that John Chalkhill's tomb in white marble is still to be seen on the walls of Winchester Cathedral, by which it appears that he died May 1679, at the age of eighty; but then, as Mr. Chambers points out, this John Chalkhill, supposing him the author of *Thealma and Clearchus*, could not also have been the "acquaintant and friend of Spenser," seeing that Spenser died in 1599, the very year in which the John Chalkhill of Winchester Cathedral was born. The very character which Walton gives of John Chalkhill, though in reality so exactly befitting himself, seems to us one valid reason against the supposition that he was the person he praises. The name of Chalkhill, too, as Mr. Chambers observes, must, if a pseudonym, have been an old one with Walton, if he wrote *Thealma*; for thirty years before its publication he had inserted in his *Complete Angler* two songs signed "Jno. Chalkhill." The scene of the poem, by whomsoever written, is laid in Arcadia; and the author, like the ancient poets, describes the golden age, and all those charms that were succeeded by the age of iron.

## PATRICK GORDON.

(Born circa 1580.)

Patrick Gordon, a Scotchman, whom Dempster describes as having been employed by the king on some mission to Poland, is the author of an English poem of considerable length, divided into seven-

teen chapters, and written in the octave stanza. The work, though purporting to be in English, is copiously replete with Scotticisms, and with expressions which violate every rule of grammar. It neither possesses the dignity of an epic poem, nor the authenticity of an historical narration. Propriety is totally disregarded: Christ and Jupiter are, with matchless indecorum, grouped together. The poem, however, with all its faults, contains some striking passages. Gordon is also the author of *Neptunus Britannicus* and other poetical works.

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## ARTHUR NEWMAN.

(Born circa 1580.)

Arthur Newman, a member of the Middle Temple, is the author of *Pleasure's Vision, with Desert's Complaint; and a short Dialogue of a Woman's Properties, betweene an Old Man and a Young*, poems published in 1619. The dialogue is conducted much after the plan of Sir John Davis's *Contention between a Wife, a Widow, and a Maid*, in Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody*. Of Arthur Newman no particulars are known; but he is a writer who, from the brevity rather than the inferiority of his productions, may be classed a minor poet. His verses are moral, harmonious, and pleasing.

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## JOHN DAVIES.

(Circa 1580-1618.)

John Davies, of Hereford, is known as the author of *The Muses' Sacrifice, or Divine Meditations* (1612); of *Microcosmos, the Discovery of the Little World, with the Government thereof* (1603), a long, tedious poem; and of several other metrical works.

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## EDWARD FAIRFAX.

(Born circa 1580.)

All the biographers of the poets have been extremely negligent with respect to this writer. Phillips crowds him into his supplement; and Winstanley, who followed him, postpones our author till after

the Earl of Rochester. Sir Thomas Blount makes no mention of him ; and Jacob informs us he wrote in the time of Charles I. ; whereas Fairfax flourished in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I., and dedicated his translation of Tasso to the former. He was natural son of Sir Thomas Fairfax, and natural brother of Sir Thomas Fairfax, Baron of Cameron. His younger brother was knighted and slain at the memorable siege of Ostend in 1601, of which place he was governor. When he married, or in what circumstances he lived, is not on record ; but it is very probable that his father supported him in a manner suitable to his own quality, he being always styled Edward Fairfax, Esq., of Newhall in Fuystone, in the forest of Knaresborough. The year in which he died is uncertain ; the last account we have of him is that he was living in 1631. He was the author of several poetical works. He wrote also a book entitled *Dæmonologie*, in which he shows a great deal of reading and knowledge. It is still in manuscript ; and in the beginning of it he gives this character of himself : “ I am in religion neither a fantastic puritan nor superstitious papist ; but so settled in conscience, that I have the sure ground of God’s word to warrant all I believe, and the commendable ordinances of our English church to approve all I practise ; in which course I live a faithful Christian and an obedient subject, and so teach my family.” Dryden introduces Spenser and Fairfax almost on a level, as the leading authors of their times ; nay, seems to give the preference to the latter in point of harmony, when he observes that Waller owed himself indebted for the harmony of his numbers to Fairfax’s *Godfrey of Bulloign*, that admirable translation of Tasso, which will ever remain a model of adaptation of the most graceful forms of one language to the requirements of another.

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#### SIR ROBERT AYTOUN.

(Born circa 1580.)

This Scottish writer is the author of a volume of poems entitled *Basia sive Strena, Cal. Jan.* (London, 1605), addressed to the most worshipful and worthy Sir James Hay, Gentleman of his Majesty’s Bedchamber. A panegyrical sonnet by him also occurs among the *Poetical Essayes* of Alexander Craig.

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## WALTER DAVISON.

(Circa 1581-1602.)

Walter Davison, a younger brother of Francis, was a contributor of several promising effusions to the *Poetical Rhapsody* of the latter. He was born in December 1581, and is presumed to have been killed in the Low Country wars, in which his brother mentions him as engaged in 1602. At all events, he is not mentioned in his father's will, 1608.

## BISHOP RICHARD CORBET.

(1582-1635.)

Richard Corbet, successively Bishop of Oxford and Norwich, was born at Ewell in Surrey, in 1582. He was the only son of Vincent Corbet, a man of some eminence for his skill in gardening,—celebrated by Ben Jonson, in an elegy alike honourable to the subject, the poet, and the friend, for his many amiable virtues,—who resided at Whitton, near Twickenham. Under his will our poet inherited sundry freehold lands and tenements lying in St. Augustin's parish, Watling Street, London, and 500*l.* upon his attaining the age of twenty-five years. After receiving the rudiments of education at Westminster School, he entered in Lent term, 1598, at Broadgate Hall, and the year following was admitted a student of Christ Church College, Oxford. In 1605 he proceeded master of arts, and became celebrated as a wit and a poet.

The following is an early specimen of his humour. “Ben Jonson was at a tavern, and in comes Bishop (but not so then) Corbet into the next room. Ben Jonson calls for a quart of *raw* wine, and gives it to the tapster. ‘Sirrah!’ says he, ‘carry this to the gentleman in the next chamber, and tell him I sacrifice my service to him.’ The fellow did, and in those terms. ‘Friend,’ says Bishop Corbet, ‘I thank him for his love; but prythee tell him from me that he is mistaken, for sacrifices are always burnt.’”

In 1612, upon the universally lamented death of Henry Prince of Wales, Corbet, then proctor, at the request of the University of Oxford, delivered a funeral oration, “very oratorically speeched (says Wood), in St. Mary's church, before a numerous auditory.” On 13th March, in the following year, he performed a similar ceremony on the interment of Sir Thomas Bodley, the munificent founder of the library known by his name.

In the religious dissensions of the period, Corbet sided with Armenian Laud against Calvinist Abbott; and on one occasion accordingly "got well rattled up" for a controversial sermon, by the repetition, Dr. Robert Abbott, the archbishop's brother.

When James, in 1605, visited Oxford, the jealous Cantabrigians vented their raillery at the entertainment given by the Oxonians to the royal visitor. It was not probable that a man of Corbet's ready wit would suffer the assailants to go unscathed; and he accordingly, when the king went in 1615 to Cambridge, composed a humorous description of the Cantabrigian reception, "to the tune of Bonny Nell," which excited numerous replies.

Corbet appears to have been of the poetical party who invited Ben Jonson to Oxford, "and thus," says Mr. Gilchrist, "rescued him from the arms of a sister University, who has long treated the Muses with indignity, and turned a hostile and disheartening eye on those who have added most celebrity to her name."

In 1616 Corbet was recommended by the Convocation as a proper person to be elected to the college which Dr. Matthew Surlbelyve, Dean of Exeter, had lately erected at Chelsea, for maintaining polemical divines, to be employed in opposing the doctrines of papists and sectaries. Whether he obtained the election does not appear; nor is it of much moment, for the establishment soon declined from its original purpose. In 1618 he made a trip to France, whence he wrote an "Epistle to Sir Robert Aylesbury," in which he gently laughs at his friend's astronomical mania, and where he composed a metrical account of his journey, which exhibits him by no means enamoured of the manners and habits of his new acquaintance.

He was now in holy orders, and, says Anthony à Wood, "became a quaint preacher, and therefore much followed by ingenious men." None of Corbet's sermons are known to be in existence; the modesty that withheld his poems from the press, during his life, prevented his adding to the multitude of devotional discourses with which the country was at this period overladen. His merits, however, were appreciated in the proper quarters. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was a patron of his, and a very sufficient one, for we find him at this time, 1618, dean of Christ Church, vicar of Cassington, prebendary of Bedminster Secunda, and chaplain to the king.

In 1619 his amiable father died, whose praises he has celebrated in the most honourable terms. When, in 1621, James paid a second visit to Oxford, Corbet, in his office of chaplain, preached before the monarch, who had presented him, as a token of his favour, with a ring, which (it would seem from a poetical pasquinade on the royal progress) so flattered the vanity of the dean, that he tied the ring to his

band-strings, "and handled it more than his text." In or about 1625, Corbet married the only daughter of his fellow-collegian, Dr. Leonard Hutton, by whom he had a daughter, Alice, and a son, Vincent, to whom, on his third birthday, he addressed a poem, beautiful as an undecaying monument of paternal affection, full of sound sense, and of exquisite morality.

On 30th July, 1629, Corbet was elected Bishop of Oxford, whence, in April 1632, he was translated to the see of Norwich, where, under the direction of Laud, now Archbishop of Canterbury, he applied himself to the reformation of sundry abuses, and to the enforcement of a conformity with the established church, the discipline of which had much relaxed during the ascendancy of Laud's Calvinistic predecessor. Among other proceedings, he was directed by his intolerant metropolitan to dislodge a congregation of Walloons from the Bishop's Chapel, or Chapel of the Virgin Mary, which they had been allowed to use. Corbet accordingly addressed to them the following characteristic letter :—

"To the Ministers and Elders of the French Church in Norwich, these :

"Salutem in Christo.

"You have promised me, from time to time, to restore my stolen bell, and to glaze my lettice windows. After three yeeres consultation (bysides other pollution), I see nothing mended. Your discipline I know care not much for a consecrated place, and anye other roome in Norwiche that hath but bredth and length may serve your turne as well as the chappel ; wherefore I say unto you, without a miracle, *Lazare, prodi foras*,—Depart, and hire some other place for your irregular meetings : you shall have time to provide for yourselves betwixte this and Whitsuntide ; and that you may not think I mean to deale with you as Felix dyd with St. Paul, that is, make you afraid, to get money, I shall keepe my worde with you, which you did not with me, and as neer as I can be like you in nothinge.

"Written by me, Richard Norwich, with myne oune hand, Dec. 26, anno 1634."

The congregation remonstrated with Laud, with whom these harsh measures originated, for Corbet had not a grain of persecution in his disposition ; but the archbishop adhered to his resolution. The congregation, however, were afterwards reinstated.

The liberality of Corbet's spirit, and his genuine zeal for the honour of his church, are shown in the donations which he contributed towards the restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral, which had remained in ruins since its second destruction by fire early in Eliza-



beth's reign, amounting to no less than 400*l.*, a very great bounty in those days ; besides which, he gave money to needy ministers, to enable them to subscribe ; and addressed to the clerk of his diocese an admonitory, persuasive, and satirical address, which must have produced considerable effect. He was not fated, however, to witness the elevation of the temple in favour of which he was thus active and benevolent. He had been long consuming with lingering disorders, and on 28th July, 1635, rested from his labours ; he was buried in the cathedral of Norwich. His person, if we may rely upon a fine portrait of him in the hall of Christ Church, Oxford, was dignified, and his frame above the common size : one of his companions says he " had a face that might heaven to affection draw ;" and Aubrey says, " he had heard that he had an admirable, grave, and venerable aspect."

In no record of his life is there the slightest trace of malevolence or tyranny. " He was," says Fuller, " of a courteous carriage, and no destructive nature to any who offended him, counting himself plentifully repaired with a jest upon him." Benevolent, generous, and spirited in his public character ; sincere, amiable, and affectionate in private life ; correct, eloquent, and ingenious as a poet,—he appears to have deserved and enjoyed through life the patronage and friendship of the great, and the applause and estimation of the good. His panegyric is liberal without grossness, and complimentary without servility ; his satires on the Puritans, a race which Corbet did not live to see ascendent, and which soon after his decease sunk literature and the arts in " the Serbonian bog" of fanaticism, evince his skill in severe and ludicrous reproof ; and the addresses to his son and to his parents, while they are proofs of his filial and parental regard, bear testimony to his command over the finer feelings. But the predominant faculty of his mind was wit, which he employed with most success when directed ironically ; of this the address to *the Ghost of Wisdom*, and the *Distracted Puritane*, are memorable examples. Indeed, he was unable to overcome his talent for humour, even when circumstance and character concurred to repress its indulgence. Of this propensity the following anecdotes from Aubrey's mss. may not improperly close this account of a character which they tend forcibly to illustrate :

" After he was Doctor of Divinity, he sang ballads at the Crosse at Abingdon. On a market-day, he and some of his comrades were at the tavern by the Crosses, (which, by the way, was then the finest of England ; I remember it when I was a freshman ; it was an admirable curious Gothique architecture, and fine figures in the niches ; it was was one of those built by King Edward for his queen). The

ballad-singer complayned he had no custome—he could not put off his ballads. The jolly Doctor puts off his gowne, and puts on the ballad-singer's leathern jacket; and being a handsome man, and a rare full voice, he presently vended a great many, and had a great audience.

"After the death of Mr. Goodwin, he was made dean of Christ Church. He had a good interest with great men, as you may finde in his poems; and that with the then great favourite, the Duke of Bucks, his excellent wit ever 'twas of recommendation to him. I have forgot the story; but at the same time Dr. Fell thought to have carried it, Dr. Corbet put a pretty trick on him, to let him take a journey to London for it, when he had already the graunt of it.

"One chaplain of his was Stubbings, a jolly fat doctor, and a very good housekeeper. As Dr. Corbet and he were riding in Lob-lane, in wet weather ('tis an extraordinary deepe dirty lane), the coach fell, and Corbet said, that Dr. S. was up to his elbows in mud, and he was up to the elbows in Stubbings.

"A.D. 1628 he was made Bishop of Oxford, and I have heard that he had an admirable, grave, and venerable aspect.

"One time, as he was confirming, the country people pressing in to see the ceremonie, said he, 'Beare off there, or I'll confirm ye with my staffe.' Another time, being to lay his hand on the head of a man very bald, he turns to his chaplaine, and said, 'Some dust, Lushington,' to keep his hand from slipping. There was a man with a great venerable beard; said the Bishop, 'You behind the beard!'

"His chaplaine, Dr. Lushington, was a very learned and ingenious man, and they loved one another. The Bishop would sometimes take the key of the wine-cellar, and he and his chaplaine would go and lock themselves in and be merry; then first he lays down his episcopal hood; 'There layes the Doctor:' then he puts off his gowne; 'There lays the Bishop:' then 'twas, 'Here's to thee, Corbet!'—'Here's to thee, Lushington!'"

## SIR JOHN BEAUMONT.

(1582-1623.)

Sir John Beaumont was the son of Francis Beaumont, one of the judges of the Common Pleas in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and brother of Francis, the dramatic colleague of Fletcher. He was born in 1582, at Grace-Dieu, the family seat, in Leicestershire, and ad-

mitted a gentleman-commoner of Broadgate Hall (now Pembroke College), Oxford, the beginning of Lent term, 1596. After three years' study here, during which he seems to have attached himself most to the poetical classics, he removed to one of the inns of court in London. But he soon quitted the study of law, and retired to Leicestershire, where he married a lady of the Fortescue family. In 1626 he was made a baronet by King Charles. Sir John died in the winter of 1628, and was buried in the church of Betton, leaving behind him three sons. Michael Drayton has dropped a hint concerning the cause of his death, but it is not easily to be understood :

" Thy care for that which was not worth thy breath,  
Brought on too soon thy much-lamented death ;  
But Heaven was kind, and would not let thee see  
The plagues that must upon this nation be,  
By whom the Muses have neglected been,  
Which shall add weight and measure to their sin."

Sir John wrote the *Crown of Thorns*, a poem in eight books, which is celebrated by one Thomas Hawkings in a copy of verses prefixed to Sir John's poems.

There is extant likewise a miscellany of his, entitled " Bosworth Field, with a taste of the variety of other poems," 1629.

He has left us also translations from Virgil's 4th Eclogue, Horace's 6th Satire of the second book, his 29th Ode of the third book, and his Epode ; of Juvenal's 16th Satire, and Persius's 2d Satire ; of Ausonius's 16th Idyl, and of Claudian's Epigram of the Old Man of Verona.

The rest of his pieces are either on religious subjects or of a moral kind.

*Bosworth Field* is the most considerable of his works. It contains many original specimens of the heroic style, not exceeded by any of his contemporaries ; and the imagery is frequently just and striking. Among his lesser poems a few sparklings of invention may now and then be discovered, and his translations are in general spirited and correct. His verses on the true form of English poetry, addressed to King James I., entitled him to a place among the most judicious critics of his time ; and the chaste complexion of the whole shows that to genius he added virtue and delicacy.

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## JOHN TAYLOR.

*(Circa 1580-1664.)*

John Taylor, "the water-poet," was born in Gloucestershire, of humble parents. He had an odd old schoolmaster, of whom he tells sundry jests, and with whom he says he advanced "from possum to posset," but "was there mired and could no further get." Leaving school, he was bound apprentice to a Thames waterman, at that time a thriving trade, and giving employment to more men than any other trade or calling in the metropolis. The prosperity of the occupation, when Taylor first entered upon it, was greatly enhanced by there being three playhouses open on the Surrey side of the river, besides the bear-baiting circus; so that all the Middlesex votaries of the bear and buskin, who would not go round by London Bridge, had to employ watermen to convey them to their Surrey entertainments. After a while, however, the trade fell off, in consequence, mainly, of the long peace under James I., which released thousands of watermen from their enforced sea-service; but partly in consequence of two of the Surrey playhouses removing into Middlesex, a proceeding at which the watermen were so disgusted, that they absolutely petitioned the king (1613) that the players might not be allowed to have a playhouse in London, nor within four miles of it, on the Middlesex side. This modest memorial, which was laid before the Commissioners of Suits by our water-poet in person, was, of course, rejected, though supported by worshipful Sir Francis Bacon, "who very worthily said, that so far forth as the public weal was to be regarded before pastimes, or a serviceable decaying multitude before a handful of particular men, a profit before pleasure, so far was our suit to be preferred before theirs;" that is, the counter-memorial which had been presented by his majesty's players. The waterman's trade was still further damaged by the proclamations from time to time issued, requiring the gentry to reside during the greater part of the year on their own estates; and was undone, says Taylor, when hackney coaches came into use. The water-poet, however, cannot himself have been much engaged in Thames watermanship, for he was employed in no fewer than sixteen voyages in the queen's ships, and was in the expeditions under Essex at Cadiz and the Azores. It was probably in the leisure hours of these voyages that he laid in that store of reading for which he properly takes credit. The names of Ovid, Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Du Bartas, Plutarch, Josephus, Marcus Aurelius, Cornelius Agrippa, Seneca, Guevara, Montaigne, Suetonius, —in English forms,—of Chaucer, Sidney, Spenser, Daniel, Nash, Fox, Holinshed, set forth in Taylor's account of his studies, prove

that he did, as he says, "care to get good books." Yet with all this store of acquired knowledge, his own productions were altogether original, being, as he says,

"No academical poetic strains,  
But homespun medley of my motley brains."

The first of these lucubrations is entitled "Taylor's Water-Work ; or the Scullers Travels from Tyber to Thames ; with his boat laden with a Hotch-potch, or Gallimaufrey of Sonnets, Satires, and Epigrams. With an ink-horn disputation betwixt a Lawyer and a Poet ; and a quarterne of new-catched Epigrams, caught the last fishing-tide ; together with an addition of Pastoral Equivoques, or the Complaint of a Shepherd, dedicated to neither Monarch nor Miser, Keaser nor Caitiff, Palatine nor Plebeian, but to great Mounsaier Multitude, alias All, or Every One."

His manner of publishing these productions, which were separately of small bulk, was to print them at his own cost, make *presents* of them, and await *sweet guerdon* from the recipients, from whom the smallest donations in return were thankfully received. James I. and Charles I. are both commemorated by our poet as having in this fashion "rewarded the barren gleanings of his poetical inventions." One of his patrons, Sir William Wade, did him, for the time, more substantial service by appointing him to the receivership of the Lieutenant of the Tower dues of "two black leathern bottles or bombards of wine" from every ship bringing that commodity into the river Thames ; but he lost this situation after awhile, or rather would not pay the price at which, by a new arrangement, it was put up for sale. Poor Taylor, moreover, lost, somewhere about the same time, 100*l.*, by reason of some surety-ship into which he had entered ; he turns this loss, however, to pleasant account in his *Navy of Ships and other Vessels that have art to sail by Land as well as by Sea*.

Among other modes of making money, Taylor exercised his skill and courage as a sailor in several wagering adventures, that is to say, in bets that he would row, in his boat, from London to the continent, and back again, in a certain time. The bet won, money was next made out of the achievement by publishing an account of it in prose or verse ; as, in 1616, we have "Taylor's Travels, three weeks, three days, and three hours observations, from London to Hamburg, in Germany, amongst Jews and Gentiles ; with descriptions of Towns and Towers, Castles and Citadels, artificial Galloweses and natural Hangmen ; dedicated for the present to the absent Odcombian knight errant, Sir Thomas Coriat, Great Britain's Error, and the World's Mirror." Another undertaking of his was to travel on foot from

London to Edinburgh, "not carrying any money to or fro, neither begging, borrowing, or asking meat, drink, or lodging." This undertaking, performed in 1618, was described in "*The Pennyless Pilgrimage; or the Moneyless Perambulation of John Taylor, alias the King's Majesty's Water-Poet,*" one of the writer's most amusing productions. His reliance upon his reputation, and upon the hospitality of those whom he knew on the way, or whom he might become known to, was fully justified; for he ate, drank, and slept of the best all the way to and fro. "At Leith," says he, "I found my long-approved and assured good friend Master Benjamin Jonson, who gave me a piece of gold of two-and-twenty shillings to drink his health in England, and withal willed me to remember his kind commendation to all his friends." Making his way merrily back to London, our penniless peregrinator's friends came to meet him at Islington, at the sign of the Maidenhead, when, "with all love, he was entertained with much good cheer, and after supper they had a play of the *Life and Death of Guy of Warwick*, played by the Earl of Derby's men; and on next morning to his house in London," his wager won. He performed a similar journey, in 1620, to Prague, of which he, of course, published an account in prose and verse. The Queen of Bohemia gave him a gracious welcome to Prague, permitted him to dandle in his arms her youngest son, Prince Rupert, and gave him the infant's shoes as a memorial. Next year he "made a very merry wherry ferry voyage from London to York;" one of the incidents of which was, that he and his four men, being driven by stress of weather into Cromer, were seized as pirates, though at once released, and provided with corn and wine and lodging, when he made himself known. He does not appear, however, to have made so much money by these and similar enterprises as he expected, for he complains desperately of the "shifts and tricks and cavils of sharking fools," who had promised, but failed, to give him various sums—

"A crown, an angel, or a pound,  
A noble, piece, or half piece—"

in a ludicrous poem, characteristically entitled *The Scourge of Baseness, or Kicksey-Wicksey, or a Lerry-Come-Twang*. His last adventure of this class was a desperate expedition from London to Queenborough, in a paper boat, with two stockfish tied to two canes for oars. The frame of this frail vessel was supported by eight large bladders, which came into essential use in half an hour after the departure from London Bridge, when, of course, the paper bottom fell to pieces. However, the wager was won; for Taylor, having started on the Saturday, reached Queenborough on the Monday morning.

A short epistle prefixed to *Taylor's Revenge, or the Rymer William Fennor forck't, ferritted, and finally fetched over the coals*, gives an account of a contest our poet had with this William Fennor, by reason of Fennor having failed to fulfil a challenge he had accepted to perform his part of an extempore drama, to be enacted by him and Taylor at the Hope Theatre.

When the rebellion broke out, Taylor withdrew to Oxford, opened an inn there, fired paper pellets at the Puritans, and made himself "much esteemed for his facetious company." When the royal cause was, for the time, ruined, Taylor returned to Westminster, and kept a public-house in Phoenix Alley, near Long Acre; after the king's death, he set up a Mourning Crown for his sign, but soon found it expedient to substitute his own portrait. When more than seventy years old, he proved the vigour of his body and mind by making a journey through Wales, and writing an account of it.

He died in 1654, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden.

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#### RICHARD NICCOLS.

(Circa 1584.)

Richard Niccols was the offspring of respectable parents residing in London, where he was born towards 1584. When about twelve years of age, he embarked in a vessel called the "Ark," which sailed with the expedition against Cadiz, in June 1596, and was present at the great and complete victory obtained both by sea and land on that occasion. Whether this voyage was the result of boyish ardour, or that he was originally intended to be actively employed for his country, in either military or marine service, is not known. He appears on his return to have resumed his studies, and in 1602 was entered a student in Magdalen College, Oxford. He took the degree of bachelor of arts in 1606, and was then esteemed among the "ingenious persons of the University." In 1610 he impliedly says he should have continued the *Mirroure for Magistrates* further, if his own affairs had suffered him to proceed; but being called away by other employments, he of force left the completion to others. What those employments were, beyond that of a poet, is not known. In that character his talents are overrated by Headley, who considers him "a poet of great elegance and imagination." Niccols, on reprinting the Induction to the *Mirroure*, found the rhyme too perfect, and the language too polished, to allow the attempting any

of his supposed emendations; but towards the conclusion of the poem, he was bold enough to reject one stanza, and foist in four of his own composing; and it is to his credit that Warton, in analysing the whole, reprinted two of these as the genuine production of Sackville. Such a compliment cannot be exceeded. He published *The Cuckoo* in 1607, and reprinted the *Mirror for Magistrates* in 1610, adding his own poems, *The Fall of Princes*, and *A Winter Night's Vision*. This vision was probably composed as long before as August 1603, when our author retired for safety to Greenwich, where wandering through the walks long favoured by Elizabeth, the circumstance of it being her natal place, combined with her then recent death, appears to have awakened his youthful muse to attempt this metrical history of her life. His other effusions were—

The Three Sisters' Teares, shed at the late solemn funerals of the Royall deceased Henry Prince of Wales, &c. 1613.

Vertues Encomium; or, the Image of Honour. In two books of Epigrammes. 1614.

Monodia; or, Waltham's complaint upon the death of that most vertuous and noble ladie lately deceased, the Lady Honor Hay, &c. 1615.

London's Artillery, briefly containing the noble practise of that worthie Societie, &c.

Sir Thomas Overbury's Vision.

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## WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

(1585-1649.)

William Drummond, a descendant of the ancient family of Drummond of Carnock, and the son of Sir John Drummond, was born at Hawthorndean, in Scotland, 13th December, 1585. He received his education at the University of Edinburgh, where he took the degree of M.A. At the age of twenty-one he went to France, and attended lectures on the civil law, a subject on which he left sufficient documents to prove that his judgment and proficiency were uncommon.

After a residence abroad of nearly four years, he returned to Scotland in 1610, in which year his father died. Instead, however, of prosecuting the study of the law, as was expected, he thought himself sufficiently rich in the possession of his paternal estate, and devoted his time to the ancient classics, and the cultivation of his poetical genius. Whether he had composed or communicated any pieces to his friends before this period, is uncertain. It was after a recovery from a dangerous illness that he wrote a prose rhapsody, entitled *Cypress Grove*; and about the same time his *Flowers of Zion*, or



*Spiritual Poems*; which, with the *Cypress Grove*, were printed at Edinburgh in 1623. A part of his sonnets, it is said, were published as early as 1616.

During his residence at Hawthorndean, he courted a young lady of the name of Cunningham, to whom he was about to be united, when she was snatched from him by a violent fever. To dissipate his grief, which every object and every thought in his retirement contributed to revive, he travelled on the continent for about eight years, visiting Germany, France, and Italy. During this time he invigorated his memory and imagination by studying the various models of original poetry, and collected a valuable set of Latin and Greek authors, with some of which he enriched the college library of Edinburgh, and others were deposited at Hawthorndean. The books and manuscripts which he gave to Edinburgh were arranged in a catalogue printed in 1627, and introduced by a Latin preface from his pen, on the advantage and honour of libraries.

On his return to Scotland, he found the nation distracted by political and religious disputes, which combined with the same causes in England to bring on a civil war. He retired to the seat of his brother-in-law, Sir John Scot, of Scotstarvet, a man of letters, and probably of congenial sentiments on public affairs. During his stay with this gentleman, he wrote his *History of the Five James's, Kings of Scotland*; a work so inconsistent with liberal notions of civil policy as to have added very little to his reputation, although when first published, a few years after his death, and when political opinions ran in extremes, it was probably not without its admirers.

It is uncertain at what time he was enabled to enjoy his retirement at Hawthorndean; but it appears he was there in his forty-fifth year, when he married Elizabeth Logan (granddaughter of Sir Robert Logan, of the house of Restelrig), in whom he fancied a resemblance to his first mistress.

During the civil war, his attachment to the king and church induced him to write many pieces in support of the establishment, which involved him with the revolutionary party, who not only called him to a severe account, but compelled him to furnish his quota of men and arms to fight against the cause which he espoused. His grief for the death of his royal master is said to have been so great as to shorten his days. He died on the 4th of December, 1649, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and was interred in the church of Lasswade. Unambitious of riches or honours, he appears to have projected the life of a retired scholar, from which he was diverted only by the commotions that robbed his country of its tranquillity. He was highly accomplished in ancient and modern literature, and in

the amusements which became a man of his rank. Among his intimate friends and learned contemporaries, he seems to have been mostly connected with the Earl of Stirling, Drayton, and Ben Jonson. The latter, as already noticed in his life, paid him a visit at Hawthorndean, and communicated to him without reserve many particulars of his life and opinions, which Drummond committed to writing, with a sketch of Jonson's character.

As a poet he ranks among the first reformers of versification, and in elegance, harmony, and delicacy of feeling is far superior to his contemporaries. One poem lately added to his other works, entitled *Polemo-Middinia, or the Battle of the Dunghill*, is a good example of burlesque.

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#### PHINEAS AND GILES FLETCHER.

(Circa 1588-1623.)

As a few dates are all that are now recoverable of the personal character of these two writers, and as there is a strong resemblance in the genius of their poetry, it seems unnecessary to make a separate article of each.

Giles, the eldest, son of Dr. Giles Fletcher, was born in 1588 ; educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took the degree of bachelor of divinity ; and died at his living of Alderton, in Suffolk, in 1623.

Phineas was educated at Eton, and admitted a scholar of King's College, Cambridge in 1600, where, in 1604, he took his bachelor's degree, and his master's in 1608. After going into the church, he was presented, in 1621, to the living of Hilgay, in Norfolk, and held it twenty-nine years. Mr. Ellis conjectures that he was born in 1584, and died about 1650.

The only production we have of Giles Fletcher is entitled *Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death* (1610), in stanzas of eight lines. It was reprinted in 1632, again in 1640, and in 1783, with Phineas Fletcher's *Purple Island*. Mr. Headley, who has bestowed more attention than any modern critic on the works of the Fletchers, pronounces the *Christ's Victory* to be a rich and picturesque poem, and on a much happier subject than the *Purple Island*, yet unenlivened by personifications. He has also very ingeniously pointed out some resemblances, to prove that Milton owed considerable obligations to the Fletchers.

## RICHARD BRAITHWAITE.

(1588-1673.)

Richard Braithwaite, son of Thomas Braithwaite, of Burnside, in Westmoreland, was born in 1588, and became a gentleman-commoner of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1604. "While he continued in that house," says Wood, "which was at least three years, he avoided as much as he could the rough paths of logic and philosophy, and traced those smooth ones of poetry and Roman history, in which at length he did excel. Afterwards he removed to Cambridge, as it seems, where also he spent some time for the sake of dead and living authors; and then receding to the north parts of England, his father bestowed on him Burnside before mentioned." Possession of Burnside was probably obtained by Braithwaite immediately upon the death of his father,—an event that created some family differences, that were only stayed by the prudent intervention of friends. He particularly alludes to this subject in a dedication to his elder brother, printed 1611, and implies that there were not wanting those "who, in the billows of their unnatural troubles, conceived no small felicity." Braithwaite married, in 1617, Frances Lawson, the daughter of an old Durham house; and living at Burnside many years, became captain of a foot company in the trained bands, a deputy-lieutenant of Westmoreland, a justice of peace, and noted wit and poet. His wife dying in 1633, he published in veneration of her memory, and as a public acknowledgment of her worth and virtues, *Anniversaries upon his Panarete*; and when reprinting his *Essays on the Five Senses* (1635), he took occasion to give an admonition to their offspring, by introducing *Love's Legacy, or Panarete's Blessing to her Children*. At an advanced period of life, when marrying again, he removed to Appleton, near Richmond, in Yorkshire; where dying on the 4th of May, 1673, he was buried in the parish church of Catterick, "leaving behind him," says Wood, "the character of a well-bred gentleman and a good neighbour." His works in prose and verse were multitudinous, and their character almost as various. On the one hand, we have *Holy Memorials, or Heavenly Mementos—The Cardinal Vertues—The Seven Beatitudes*, and so on; on the other, *Drunken Barnabee's Journal*—"wanton measures," in which the author would seem to draw his own character as the slave, in youth, of drunkenness and debauchery; though, indeed, he shows himself so well acquainted with the history, antiquities, and customs of every place in his poetical itinerary, and exhibits so much acuteness of remark and keenness of satire, that, but for his later publications (in which he sets forth *his penitence* for the licentiousness of his early years), one might con-

sider him, *sub persona*, a drunkard merely in masquerade. There is an excellent edition (the seventh) of the *Barnabæ Itinerarium, or Barnabee's Journal*, published in 1818; and we have an edition of Braithwaite's Odes, printed at Lee Priory, 1815.

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GEORGE WITHER.

(Circa 1588-1667.)

"George Wither, a most profuse pourer-forth of English rhyme (not without great pretence to a poetical zeal) against the vices of the times, in his *Motto*, his *Remembrancer*, and other suchlike satirical works. Besides which, he turned into English verse the *Songs of Moses*, and other *Hymns of the Old Testament*; in all which, and whatever else there is of his dispersed up and down (for his works, however voluminous, have been scarce thought worthy to be collected into a volume), whosoever shall go about to imitate his lofty style, may boldly venture to ride post and versify; yet because vulgarly taken for a great poet, and by some for a prophet, in regard many things are fancied to have come to pass which he pretended to predict, he must not be omitted." The poet thus doubtfully introduced by Phillips, George Wither, the descendant of an old Hampshire family, was born at Bentworth, near Alton in that county, in 1588. In or about 1604 he was sent to the University of Oxford; but he had not been long there when his father recalled him to superintend the agricultural labours of his property. He did not stay long at home; for in 1613 we find him in London a Puritan reformer, and as such imprisoned in the Marshalsea for the unhesitating denunciation of what he deemed wrong in men and things, in a poem entitled *Abuses Stript and Whipt*. He was again imprisoned in 1615 for a similar flagellation of the evil-doers in his *Scourge*. While so incarcerated, he translated Bishop Nemesius' Greek poem on the Nature of Man; wrote *The Shepherds' Hunting*, "which," says Mr. Campbell, "contains perhaps the very finest touches that ever came from his hasty and irregular pen;" and composed his *Satire to the King* (a justification of his former satires), which, if it gained him his liberation, certainly effected it without retracting his principles. "From youth to age," continues Campbell, "George Wither continued to pour forth his lucubrations in prophecy, remonstrance, complaint, and triumph, through good report and evil report, through all vicissitudes of fortune; at one time in command among the saints, at another scrawling his thoughts in gaol (when pen and ink were denied him) with red ochre upon a trencher." On coming out of prison, he pub-

lished his *Hymns and Songs of the Church*, which, though protected by royalty, and sanctioned by a high dignitary of the Church, "brought no joy" to the author, who was cheated by the booksellers, "those cruel beemasters," as he calls them, "who burn the poor or the man-bees for their honey." Snubbed by clergymen for poaching on their preserves, and vituperated by scornful laymen for troubling the public with "needless songs and popish rhymes"—the latter an exceedingly absurd imputation as directed against our puritan poet,—he next (also under royal patronage) published a metrical version of the Psalms. His military ardour induced him to take a commission as captain of horse in the expedition against the Scots (1639); and when the civil war broke out, to raise a troop of horse for the Parliament, by whom, in 1642, he was appointed captain of Farnham Castle, in Surrey, which, on 1st December in that year, he surrendered—it is said with needless haste—to Sir William Waller. He was taken prisoner by the Cavaliers, who thought of hanging him; but Sir John Denham, it is said, got him off on a plea which the menaced Puritan, however disposed to accept its results, could scarcely be pleased with: "Please your majesty," said Sir John, "don't hang George Wither, so that it mayn't be said I'm the worst poet alive."

By Cromwell he was appointed general of all the horse and foot in the county of Surrey; by Charles II. he was robbed of his property and thrown into prison, whence he was not released until after three years' harsh incarceration, rendered probably none the gentler by the incessant storm of complaints, remonstrances, and denunciations which he was not to be deterred from composing there. He died, probably in distress, on 2d May, 1667, and was buried between the east door and the south end of the Savoy Church, in the Strand.

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### THOMAS CAREW.

(1589-1639.)

Thomas Carew, descended from the ancient family of that name in Devonshire, was born in 1589; he received his academical education at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, but was neither matriculated nor took any degree.

After leaving college he improved himself by travelling and associating with men of learning and talents, both at home and abroad; and being distinguished for superior elegance of manners and taste, he was received into the court of Charles I. as a gentleman of the *privy chamber* and *sewer in ordinary*.

He appears, after this appointment, to have passed his days in affluence and gaiety. His talents were highly valued by his contemporaries, particularly by Ben Jonson and Sir William Davenant.

His death is said to have taken place in 1639, which agrees with the information we have in Clarendon's life. "He was a person of a pleasant and a facetious wit, and made many poems (especially in the amorous way), which, for the sharpness of the fancy, and the elegance of the language in which that fancy was spread, were at least equal, if not superior, to any of that time; but his glory was, that after fifty years of his life spent with less severity or exactness than it ought to have been, he died with great remorse for that license, and with the greatest manifestations of Christianity that his best friends could desire." It is pleasing to record such ample atonement for the licentiousness of some of his poems.

It does not appear that any of his poems were published during his lifetime, except such as were set to music. The first collection was printed in 12mo, 1604.

Carew's *Cælum Britannicum*, at one time erroneously attributed to Davenant, was printed with the first edition of his poems, and afterwards separately in 1651.

Oldys informs us, that "Carew's sonnets were more in request than any poet's of his time. They were many of them set in music by the two famous composers Henry and William Lawes, and other eminent masters, and sung at court in the masques." It may be added, that Carew was one of the old poets whom Pope studied, and from whom he borrowed. Dr. Percy honours him with the compliment of being an "elegant and almost forgotten writer, whose poems deserve to be revived."

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### WILLIAM BROWNE.

(1590-1645.)

William Browne, the son of Thomas Browne, of Tavistock, in Devonshire, was born in 1590, and became a student of Exeter College, Oxford. After making great progress in literature, he removed to the Inner Temple, where his attention to the study of the law was frequently interrupted by his devotion to the Muses. In his twenty-third year (1613) he published the first part of his *Britannia's Pastorals*, which, according to the custom of the time, was ushered into the world with so many poetical eulogies, that he appears to have secured at a very early age the friendship and favour of the most celebrated of his contemporaries, among whom we find the names of

Selden and Drayton. To these he afterwards added Davies of Hereford, Ben Jonson, and others.

In the following year he published *The Shepherd's Pipe*, in seven eclogues.

In 1616 he published the second part of his *Britannia's Pastorals*, recommended as before by his poetical friends, whose praises he repaid with liberality in the body of the work. About 1624 he returned to Exeter College, in the capacity of tutor to Robert Dormer, Earl of Caernarvon, a nobleman who fell in the battle of Newbury in 1643. While guiding the studies of this nobleman, Browne was created master of arts, with this honourable notice in the public register : "Vir omni humana literatura et bonarum artium cognitione instructus."

After leaving the University with Lord Caernarvon, he found a liberal patron in William Earl of Pembroke, who took him into his family, and employed him in such a manner, according to Wood, that he was enabled to purchase an estate. Little more, however, is known of his history; nor is the exact time of his death ascertained. Wood finds that one of both his names, of Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, died in the winter of 1645; but knows not whether this be the same. He hints at his person in these words: "As he had a little body, so a great mind:" a high character from this biographer, who had no indulgence for poetical failings.

Browne has experienced the fate of many of his contemporaries, whose fame died with them, and whose writings have been left to be revived, under many disadvantages, by an age of refined taste and curiosity.

We have no edition of Browne's poems from 1625 to 1772, when Thomas Davies, the bookseller, published them in three small volumes, but very imperfectly.

Few poets, however, of his age have a better claim to notice than Browne. His works exhibit abundant specimens of true inspiration; and had his judgment been equal to his powers of invention, or had he yielded less to the bad taste of his age, or occasionally met with a critic instead of a flatterer, he would have been entitled to a much higher rank in the class of genuine poets. His *Pastorals* form a vast storehouse of rural imagery and description; and in personifying the passions and affections he exhibits pictures that are not only faithful but striking, just to nature and to feeling, and frequently heightened by original touches of the pathetic and sublime, and by many of those wild graces which true genius can exhibit. He studied Spenser, as well as the Italian poets: to the latter he owes something of elegance and something of extravagance; from the former he appears to

have caught the idea of a story like the *Faerie Queen*, although it wants regularity of plan; and he follows his great model in a profusion of allegorical description and romantic landscape.

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DR. HENRY KING.

(1591-1669.)

Dr. Henry King, son of John King, Bishop of London, was born in 1591, and entering the church, became Bishop of Chichester. He turned the Psalms into verse in 1651, and published in 1657 a small volume of poems, elegies, paradoxes, and sonnets. His elegies are on the deaths of Prince Henry, Sir W. Raleigh, Gustavus Adolphus, &c. His verses are terse and elegant; but like those of most of his contemporaries, deficient in simplicity. He died in 1669.

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JOHN LANE.

(Circa 1590.)

"John Lane," writes Phillips, "a fine old Queen Elizabeth gentleman, who was living within my remembrance, and whose several poems, had they not the ill fate to remain unpublished, when much better meriting than many that are in print, might possibly have gained him a name not much inferior if not equal to Drayton and others of the next rank to Spenser; but they are all to be produced in manuscript, namely, his *Poetical Vision*; his *Alarm to the Poets*; his *Twelve Months*; his *Guy of Warwick*, an heroic poem (at least as much as many others that are so entitled); and lastly, his *Supplement to Chaucer's Squire's Tale*."

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ROBERT HERRICK.

(1591.)

Robert Herrick (Erick, Eyricke, Herick), the descendant of an ancient family, seated at Houghton in Leicestershire, and the fourth son of Nicholas Herrick, of London, goldsmith, was born in Cheap-side, August 1591. When 22, he was entered, at the charge of his uncle, Sir William Herrick, a fellow-commoner of St. John's College, Cambridge, where for three years he applied himself with great zeal to study. His uncle's purse was called into frequent requisition for the purpose of supplying the young collegian, whose parents were not



rich enough to meet the expenses of a University education with the materials of reading. "My studie craves but your assistance," he writes to his patron on one occasion, "to furnish hir with bookes, wherein she is most desirous to laboure. Blame not hir modest boldness, but suffer the aspersions of your love to distill upon hir, and next to heaven, she will consecrate hir laboures unto you ; and because that time hath devoured some years, I am the more importunate in the craving." The years he thus feelingly deplores as devoured, are those which he had passed in London, and which, from his father's comparatively limited means, he had been unable to apply to adequate study. The poets of Greece and of Rome occupied much of his attention ; among the former, the favourites seem to have been Homer, Pindar, and Anacreon. Of the latter,

" Stately Virgil, witty Ovid, by  
Whom faire Corinna sits, and doth comply  
With yvorie wrists his laureat-head, and steeps  
His eye in dew of kisses while he sleeps ;  
Then soft Catullus, sharp-fang'd Martial,  
And low'ring Lucan, Horace, Juvenal,  
And snakie Persius."

In 1618 our poet removed to Trinity Hall, with a view to the studie of the law, but this purpose does not appear to have been long pursued, since, before he left the University, he took his degree, not in *law*, but in *arts*.

In October, 1629, our poet having, under the patronage of the Earl of Exeter, taken orders, was presented by Charles I. to the vicarage of Dean Prior, in Devonshire, where he spent the next nineteen years of his life, very popular with his parishioners, for his *florid and witty discourse*, but exceedingly dissatisfied himself with the obscure retirement of the place.

" More discontents I never had,  
Since I was born, than here ;  
Where I have been, and still am sad,  
In this dull Devonshire."

Dull as he describes Devonshire to have been to him, it was certainly there that he cultivated his genius for poetry, and that taste for flowers and odours, and dews, and clear waters, and soft airs, and sounds, and bright skies, and woodland solitudes, and moonlight bowers, which he so charmingly and so genially manifests throughout his verses. He himself says, indeed :

Yet, justly too, I must confess,  
 I ne'er invented such  
 Ennobled numbers for the press  
 Than where I loath'd so much."

He lived all the while a bachelor, in a house tended by his maid Pru,—his sole influencing nymph or goddess, according to Phillips; and out of doors companioned by a pet pig, which Dr. Nott tells us he amused himself by teaching to drink out of a tankard. His features, by no means of agreeable aspect, were chiefly remarkable for a huge Roman nose, balanced by a vast double chin. His voice was weak, so that his parishioners could at times scarce hear him, whereat he so chafed, that, one Sunday, tradition reports, he threw his sermon at his congregation, cursing them for their inattention. In 1648, Cromwell relieved him for a while from the *ennui* of Dean Prior, by ejecting him from that vicarage, on which occasion he returned to London, very much delighted, according to his own account.

"From the dull confines of the drooping west,  
 To see the day spring from the pregnant east,  
 Ravisht in spirit, I come, nay more, I fly,  
 To thee, blest place of my nativitie."

He had, however, to contend with infinite poverty, in his secular state, becoming absolutely dependent upon charity for his subsistence, until the publication of his *Hesperides*, or *Works both Humane and Divine*, effected some source against penury, in procuring for him money and friends, for the work and its author became equally popular with the *generous and boon loyalists*, who looked upon Herrick as a fellow-sufferer with themselves in the cause of monarchy. During a residence of twelve or thirteen years in London, while his vicarage was withheld from him, he cultivated the acquaintance, and enjoyed the society, of the eminent wits and learned men of the time. He writes with enthusiasm of the *lyric feasts* which he celebrated with Ben Jonson :

"At the Sun,  
 The Dog, the Triple Tunne."

He was intimate with the *most learned, wise, and arch-antiquary*, John Selden; and he could also number among his friends Denham, the accomplished author of *Cooper's Hill*; Cotton, the inimitable translator of *Montaigne*; and Endymion Porter, the generous patron of literary merit.\* With the Restoration, Herrick was restored to

\* Preface to Pickering's edition of *Herrick*, 1825.

his vicarage, where he died, it is not known in what year. His only production, other than the *Hesperides*, was a poem called *Charon*, contributed to a work published in 1650, entitled *Lachrymæ Musarum*, expressed in elegies upon the death of Henry Lord Hastings.

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### FRANCIS QUARLES.

(1592-1644.)

It is the fate of many to receive from posterity that commendation which, though deserved, they missed during their lives ; others, on the contrary, take their full complement of praise from their contemporaries, and gain nothing from their successors ; a double payment is rarely the lot of any one. In every nation, few indeed are they who, allied, as it were, to immortality, can boast of a reputation sufficiently bulky and well-founded to catch, and to detain, the eye of each succeeding generation as it rises. The revolutions of opinion, gradual improvement, and new discoveries will shake, if not demolish, the finest fabrics of the human intellect. Fame, like virtue, is seldom stationary ; if it ceases to advance, it inevitably goes backward ; and speedy are the steps of its receding, when compared with those of its advances.

Writers who do not belong to the first class, yet of distinguished merit, should rest contented with the scanty praise of the few for the present, and trust with confidence to posterity. He who writes well, leaves an imperishable name behind him : the partial and veering gales of favour, though silent perhaps for one century, are sure to rise in gusts in the next. Truth, however tardy, is infallibly progressive, and with her walks justice. Let this console deserted genius ; those honours which, through envy or accident, are withheld in one age, are sure to be repaid, with interest, by taste and gratitude in another. These reflections are more immediately suggested by the memory of Quarles, which has been branded with more than common abuse, and who seems often to have been censured from the want of being read. If his poetry failed to gain him friends and readers, his piety should at least have secured him peace and good-will. He too often, no doubt, mistook the enthusiasm of devotion for the inspiration of fancy ; to mix the waters of Jordan and Helicon in the same cup was reserved for the hand of Milton ; and for him, and him only, to find the bays of Mount Olivet equally verdant with those of Parnassus. Yet, as the effusions of a real poetical mind, however thwarted by untowardness of subject, will be seldom rendered totally abortive,



LYDGATE PRESENTING HIS BOOK TO THE EARL OF WARWICK.

From an illuminated Ms. in the British Museum.



we find in Quarles original imagery, striking sentiment, fertility of expression, and happy combinations, together with a compression of style that merits the observation of the writers of verse. Gross deficiencies of judgment, and the infelicity of his subjects, concurred in ruining him. His *Enchiridion* (1658), consisting of select brief observations, moral and political, is a work of great merit. Had this little piece been written at Athens or at Rome, its author would have been classed with the wise men of his country. Our author was cupbearer to the Queen of Bohemia, secretary to the Primate of Ireland, and chronologer to the city of London; in the mention of which latter office, his widow, in her life of him, says, "which place he held to his death, and would have given that city (and the world) a testimony that he was their faithful servant, if it had pleased God to bless him with life to perfect what he had begun." His sufferings, both in mind and estate, during the civil wars, were considerable. Winstanley tells us he was plundered of his books, and some rare manuscripts which he intended for the press. Walpole and Granger have asserted that he had a pension from Charles I., though they produce no authority; it is not improbable, as the king had taste to discover merit and generosity to reward it. Wood, in mentioning a publication of Dr. Burges, which was abused by an anonymous author, in a pamphlet called *A Whip*, and answered by Quarles, styles our author "an old puritanical poet, the sometimes darling of our plebeian judgments." Phillips says of his works that "they have been ever, and still are, in wonderful veneration among the vulgar." He was born at Stewards, in the parish of Rumford in Essex, in 1592; and died, the father of eighteen children, in September 1644. He was buried in St. Leonard's, Foster Lane. His death was lamented in a copy of alcaics by Dr. Duport, subjoined to *A Relation of the Life and Death of Mr. Francis Quarles, by Ursula Quarles, his widow*. In an obscure book of epigrams, by Thomas Bancroft, there is one addressed to Quarles, in which he intimates that he had been pre-occupied in a subject by our poet. He wrote a comedy called *The Virgin Widow*, printed in 1649, and several poems, chiefly of the religious kind. Mr. Langbaine says, "he was a poet that mixed religion and fancy together; and was very careful in all his writings not to entrench upon good manners by any scurrility in his works, or any ways offending against his duty to God, his neighbour, and himself." Thus, according to Langbaine, and others have given the same testimonial, he was a very good man.

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## GEORGE HERBERT.\*

*(Born 1593.)*

George Herbert, a member of the great family of that name, was born 3d April, 1593, near Montgomery. At the age of twelve he was sent to Westminster school, whence, in 1608, he was, as a King's scholar, elected to Trinity College, Cambridge. By his twenty-second year, his great cultivation of learning, and his excellent conduct, had honourably brought him to the degree of M.A., his greatest diversion from his study being the practice of music, in which he became a great master; and of which he would say, that it did relieve his drooping spirits, compose his distracted thoughts, and raised his weary soul so far above earth, that it gave him an earnest of the joys of heaven before he possessed them. In 1619 he was chosen orator for the University.

The first notable occasion of showing his fitness for this employment was manifested in a letter to King James, upon the occasion of his sending that University his Basilicon Doron.

This letter was written in such excellent Latin, and all the expressions so suited to the genius of the king, that he inquired the orator's name, and then asked William Earl of Pembroke if he knew him, whose answer was, that he knew him very well, and that he was his kinsman; but he loved him more for his learning and virtue than for that he was of his name and family. At which answer the king smiled, and asked the earl leave that he might love him too, for he took him to be the jewel of that University.

Well disposed to profit by this royal encouragement, he learned the Italian, Spanish, and French tongues, with a view to a secretaryship of state, and attended the king wheresoever the court was, who, after a time, gave him a sinecure of 120*l.* per annum. With this, and his annuity, and the advantage of his college and of his oratorship, he enjoyed his genteel humour for clothes and court-like company, and seldom looked towards Cambridge, unless the king was there; but then he never failed, and at other times left the manage of his orator's place to his learned friend Mr. Herbert Thorndike.

He had often designed to leave the University, and decline all study, which he thought impaired his health, already weak. But his mother would not consent, and he was too dutiful a son to oppose her wishes.

With the death of James, died also Herbert's court-hopes; so he presently betook himself to a friend in Kent, where he lived very privately. At last God inclined him to put on a resolution to serve at

\* Abridged from Walton.

his altar ; and entering into sacred orders, he was made prebend of Layton Ecclesia, July 15, 1626, near Spalding, in the county of Huntingdon, the then decayed church of which he rebuilt by his own contributions and those of his kindred and friends, and especially those of his intimate associate, excellent Mr. Arthur Woodnot.

About 1629, Herbert was seized with a sharp quotidian ague, and thinking to remove it by change of air, went to Woodford, in Essex, to his beloved brother, Sir Henry Herbert. Here, by excess of dieting himself, he got rid indeed of the ague, but incurred great danger of consumption, to recover from which he went to Dauntsey in Wiltshire. The owner of it, the Earl of Danby, loved him, and gave him affectionate welcome. Here his health was apparently improved to a good degree of strength and cheerfulness.

A near kinsman to the Earl of Danby, Mr. Charles Danvers, of Bainton, in Wilts, often previously publicly declared a desire that Mr. Herbert would marry any of his nine daughters, for he had so many, but rather his daughter Jane than any other, because Jane was his beloved daughter. And he had often said the same to Mr. Herbert himself.

Jane's father died before Herbert's retirement to Dauntsey ; yet some friends to both parties procured their meeting, at which time a mutual affection entered into both their hearts, as a conqueror enters into a surprised city ; and love having got such possession, governed, and made there such laws and resolutions as neither party was able to resist ; insomuch that she changed her name into Herbert the third day after this first interview.

About three months after this marriage, by the intervention of the Earl of Pembroke, Mr. Herbert was inducted into the good and more pleasant than healthful parsonage of Bemerton, near Salisbury.

When at his induction he was shut into Bemerton church, being left there alone to toll the bell, as the law required him, he stayed so much longer than an ordinary time before he returned to those friends that stayed expecting him at the church-door, that his friend Mr. Woodnot looked in at the church-window, and saw him lie prostrate on the ground before the altar ; at which time and place, as he after told Mr. Woodnot, he set some rules to himself for the future management of his life, and then and there made a vow to labour to keep them.

That Mr. Herbert might the better preserve those holy rules which such a priest as he intended to be ought to observe, and that time might not insensibly blot them out of his memory, but that the next year might show him his variations from this year's resolutions, he did set down his rules then resolved upon, in that order as the world now sees them printed in the *Country Parson*.



This beautiful and touching history of his ministry at Bemerton is exquisitely narrated by Izaak Walton, in his elaborate, but in every line interesting, life of our poet.

"His chiefest recreation was music, in which heavenly art he was a most excellent master, and did himself compose many divine hymns and anthems, which he set and sung to his lute or viol; and though he was a lover of retiredness, yet his love to music was such, that he went usually twice every week, on certain appointed days, to the cathedral church in Salisbury, and at his return would say, that his time spent in prayer and cathedral-music elevated his soul, and was his heaven upon earth. But before his return thence to Bemerton, he would usually sing and play his part at an appointed private music-meeting; and to justify this practice he would often say, 'religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it.'"

The consumptive tendency already indicated, and which was encouraged by the air of the locality, developed itself by degrees, and taking possession of Mr. Herbert's frame, at length prostrated it. The manner of his departure is thus beautifully described by Walton:

"Thus he continued meditating, and praying, and rejoicing till the day of his death; and on that day said to Mr. Woodnot, 'My dear friend, I am sorry I have nothing to present to my merciful God but sin and misery; but the first is pardoned, and a few hours will now put a period to the latter, for I shall suddenly go hence and be no more seen.' Upon which expression Mr. Woodnot took occasion to remember him of the re-edifying Layton church, and his many acts of mercy. To which he made answer, saying, 'They be good works if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise.' After this discourse he became more restless, and his soul seemed to be weary of her earthly tabernacle; and this uneasiness became so visible, that his wife, his three nieces, and Mr. Woodnot stood constantly about his bed, beholding him with sorrow, and an unwillingness to lose the sight of him whom they could not hope to see much longer. As they stood thus beholding him, his wife observed him to breathe faintly and with much trouble, and observed him to fall into a sudden agony, which so surprised her that she fell into a sudden passion, and required of him to know how he did. To which his answer was, that he had passed a conflict with his last enemy, and had overcome him by the merits of his master Jesus. After which answer he looked up and saw his wife and nieces weeping to an extremity, and charged them, if they loved him, to withdraw into the next room, and there pray every one alone for him; for nothing but their lamentations could make his death uncomfort-

able. To which request their sighs and tears would not suffer them to make any reply; but they yielded him a sad obedience, leaving only with him Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock. Immediately after they had left him, he said to Mr. Bostock, 'Pray, sir, open that door, then look into that cabinet, in which you may easily find my last will, and give it into my hand;' which being done, Mr. Herbert delivered it into the hand of Mr. Woodnot, and said: 'My old friend, I here deliver you my last will, in which you will find that I have made you sole executor for the good of my wife and nieces; and I desire you to show kindness to them, as they shall need it. I do not desire you to be just, for I know you will be so for your own sake; but I charge you, by the religion of our friendship, to be careful of them.' And having obtained Mr. Woodnot's promise to be so, he said, 'I am now ready to die.' After which words he said, 'Lord, forsake me not, now my strength faileth me; but grant me mercy for the merits of my Jesus. And now, Lord—Lord, now receive my soul!' And with those words he breathed forth his divine soul without any apparent disturbance, Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock attending his last breath, and closing his eyes."

The poems of George Herbert, the chief of which have been incidentally noticed, form two volumes, and are inspired by the most earnest piety.

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#### ARTHUR WILSON.\*

(1598-1652.)

"Arthur Wilson, son of Richard Wilson of Yarmouth, in Norfolk, gentleman, was born in that county, and became a gentle-commoner of Trinity College, Oxford, in 1631, being then about thirty-three years of age, where spending more than two years, was all the academical education that he ever received; but whether he took a degree, or was actually created M.A., does not appear in the registers. During his stay at college he was very punctual in frequenting the chapel and hall, and in observing all the orders of the college and University. He had little skill in the Latin tongue, less in the Greek, a good readiness in the French, and some smattering in the Dutch. He had travelled in Germany, France, and Spain, in the quality of a servant to Robert Earl of Essex, and was well seen in the mathematics and poetry, and something in the common law of the nation. He had composed some comedies, which were acted at the Blackfriars in London, by the king's players, and at the Act time at Ox-

\* Anthony à Wood.

ford, with good applause, himself being present ; but whether they are printed I cannot yet tell ; sure I am that I have seen several specimens of his poetry printed in divers books. His carriage was very courteous and obliging, and such as did become a well-bred gentleman. He also had a great skill of the English tongue, as well in writing as speaking ; and had he bestowed his endeavours on another subject than that of history, they would have without doubt seemed better. For in those which he hath done are wanting the principal matters conducing to the completion of that faculty, viz. matter from record, exact time, name, and place ; which, by his endeavouring too much to set out his bare collections in an affected and bombastic style, are much neglected. He wrote *The History of Great Britain, being the Life and Reign of King James the First, relating to what passed from his first Access to the Crown till his Death* (London, 1653), in which he favoured Robert Devereux, the last Earl of Essex, and his allies, and underprized such as were more in the king's favour than he. The reason is, because he from his youth had attended that count in his chamber, and had received an annual pension from him several years. After his death he was received into the family of Robert Earl of Warwick, and by him made his steward, of whose father, named Robert also, he maketh honourable mention in the said history ; in which may easily be discerned a partial Presbyterian vein that constantly goes throughout the whole work ; and it being the geny of those people to pry more than they should into the courts and comportments of princes, do take occasion thereupon to traduce and bespatter them. He died at Felsted, near Little Leighes (the seat of the Earl of Warwick), in the county of Essex, about the beginning of October, 1652, and was buried in the chancel of the church there."

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#### SIR JOHN MENNIS.

(1598-1670.)

" John Mennis, the third son of Andrew Mennis, Esq. was born at St. Peter's, Sandwich, Kent, 11th May, 1598, and was educated in grammar learning in the free school there. In the seventeenth year of his age, or thereabouts, he became a commoner of Corpus Christi College, where continuing some years, did advance himself much in various sorts of learning, especially in humanity and poetry, and something in history. Afterwards he became a great traveller, a most noted seaman, and as well skilled in marine affairs, in building of ships, and all belonging thereunto, as any man of his time. In

the reign of King James I. he had a place in the Navy Office, and in the reign of King Charles I. was made comptroller of it. In 1636 I find him a militia captain, and in 1639 he was captain of a troop of horse in the expedition against the Scots. In 1641 I find him a vice-admiral; and by that title did he receive the honour of knighthood from his majesty at Dover, in the month of February in the same year. Afterwards, upon the breaking out of the rebellion, he closely adhered to the cause of his majesty; and in 1642 I find him captain of a ship called the *Rainbow* for his majesty's service, while Robert Earl Warwick was vice-admiral, but how long he continued in that employment I cannot tell; sure I am that when his majesty's cause declined he left the nation, and for a time adhered to Prince Rupert, while he roved on the seas against the usurpers in England; who being successless, he retired to King Charles II. in exile, took his fortune as other royalists did, yet always in a gay, cheerful, and merry condition. After the return of his majesty from his exile, he was made governor of Dover Castle, and had the place of chief comptroller of the navy conferred on him, which he kept to his dying day, being accounted by all that knew him to be an honest and stout man, generous and religious, and well skilled in physic and chemistry. This person, who was always poetically given, and therefore his company was delightful to all ingenious and witty men, was author of a great book entitled *Musarum Deliciæ, or the Muses' Recreation*, containing several pieces of poetic wit (London, 1656, Oct. 2d). James Smith, whom I have mentioned under the year 1667, had so great a hand in that book, that he is esteemed the author almost of half of it. Sir John Mennis hath also written *Epsom Wells*, a poem; and divers other poems, scattered in other men's works. He hath also extant a mock poem on Sir William Davenant and his Gondibert; and did assist, as I have been credibly informed, Sir John Suckling in the composition of some of his poetry; on whom, and his fine troop of horse that ran away when they were to engage with the enemy, he wrote a scoffing ballad. At length, he having lived beyond the age of man, concluded his last days in the Navy Office in Seething Lane, within the city of London, on Saturday the 18th of February, 1670; whereupon his body was buried at the upper end of the chancel of the church of St. Olave's, in Hart Street, on the 27th day of the same month. Soon after was a neat monument erected over his grave, with an inscription thereon, much becoming the person for whom it was set up." Thus far Anthony à Wood. The editor of the *Wit's Recreation*, &c. (1817) proceeds:

"After a diligent search through all the histories of the civil wars

and the state papers, we can gather nothing to our purpose prior to the Restoration, except from Lord Clarendon.

“Of the revolt of the fleet in the reign of Charles I., his lordship observes :

‘The rear-admiral Sir John Mennis, who was of unquestionable integrity, and Captain Burly, were the only two who refused to submit to the Earl of Warwick, the Parliament high admiral. They were quickly discharged and set on shore; and the rest, without any scruple or hesitation, obliged themselves to obey the Earl of Warwick in the service of the Parliament: so that the storm was now over, and the Parliament fully and entirely possessed of the royal navy and militia by sea; for they quickly disposed of two other captains, Kettleby and Stradlin, whom they could not corrupt, who guarded the Irish seas, and got those ships likewise in their service. And thus his majesty was without one ship of his own, in his three kingdoms, at his devotion.’

“This noble fidelity is a lasting honour to Sir John and the three brave captains who durst remain loyal and true in a time of universal treason. When Prince Rupert undertook the care of the little but faithful fleet which he had collected together, he appointed Sir John Mennis commander of the *Swallow*, a ship of which he had many years before been captain. This squadron sailed to Helvoetsluys; but the prevailing party defeated the great object of the expedition. Sir John afterwards appears to have been appointed to co-operate with the loyal Colonel Penruddock in the revolt against Cromwell; but the cause was weakly supported, and terminated in the ruin of several on land; happily Sir John was safe. He continued with his sovereign till the Restoration, when his merit was well remembered. The gaiety of his spirits, and his mental abilities, greatly assisted his interest. Nautical men are generally sent to sea with very little learning; but he, being both a scholar and a gentleman, was probably the most accomplished seaman in the fleet, with the exception of the Earl of Sandwich, who was able to distinguish himself by his pen and his pencil as well as by his word, as his mss. abundantly testify. By these mss. it is evident that his lordship highly valued Sir John Menus, as he writes his name. In 1662 he was with that nobleman at Tangiers. In 1662 we find him with Lord Sandwich at Lisbon, to whose court he went to receive Catherine the Infanta, the consort of Charles II. We here see him employed in taking and valuing the jewels which composed a part of the queen’s fortune. At this period he was vice-admiral of the fleet; and without doubt received some valuable presents, as well from the court of Portugal as from his own. Whatever his gallantry, however, it must have been put exceedingly

to the test by the Portuguese maids of honour who accompanied her majesty to England; for they seem to have been carefully and most skilfully selected for their extreme ugliness.

"We hear little of him after this time, when, indeed, his age and services required retirement. He had outlived the wits of his youthful days, and England was more strange to him than the continent, where he had spent so large a portion of his life. Were it worth the inquiry, many notices of him and Dr. Smith might perhaps be found in the writings of their contemporaries.\* Neither Sir John nor any of his family sat in parliament after the return of Charles II."

## CHARLES ALEYN.

(Circa 1600-1640.)

Charles Aleyn received his education at Sidney College in Cambridge; and when he went to London, became assistant to Thomas Farnaby, the famous grammarian, at his great school in Goldsmith's-rents, in the parish of St. Giles's, Cripplegate. In the year 1631 he published two poems on the victories of Creci and Poitiers, written in stanzas of six lines, of which the following may suffice as an example. The Black Prince is encouraging his army at the battle of Creci:

"Courageous Edward spurs their valour on,  
And cheers his sprightly soldiers: where he came,  
His breath did kindle valour where was none;  
And where it found a spark, it made a flame:  
Armies of fearful harts will scorn to yield,  
If lions be their captains in the field."

\* In Sir John Denham's poems is an epistle "To Sir John Mennis being invited from Calais to Boulogne to eat a pig." It begins thus:

"All on a weeping Monday,  
With a fat Bulgarian sloven,  
Little Admiral John  
To Boulogne is gone," &c.

And in Richard Fleckno's *Diarium*, 1656, are these lines:

—"Our English Dr. Smith,  
Whose Muse so bonny is and blythe;  
Or in fine of Sir John Mennis,  
For excellence yieldeth not to anys."

When Aleyn left Mr. Farnaby, he went into the family of Edward Sherburne, Esq., to be tutor to his son, who succeeded his father as clerk of the ordnance, and was also commissary-general of the artillery to King Charles I. at the battle of Edgehill. The next piece which our author produced, a poem in honour of King Henry VII. and the important battle which gained him the crown of England, was published in the year 1638, under the title of *The Historie of that wise and fortunate prince Henrie, of that name the seventh, King of England; with that famed Battaille fought between the said King Henry and Richard III. named Crook-back, upon Redmore near Besworth.*

Besides these three poems, there are in print some little copies of commendatory verses ascribed to him, and prefixed to the works of other writers, particularly before the earliest editions of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. In 1639 he published the *History of Eurialus and Lucretia*. This was a translation; the story is to be found among the Latin epistles of Æneas Sylvius. The year after, he is said to have died, and to have been buried in the parish of St. Andrew's, Holborn.

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## HENRY HUTTON.

(Circa 1600-1671.)

Henry Hutton, the fifth son of Edward Hutton, a member of an "ancient and genteel family in the county palatine of Durham," having been educated at Oxford, where he graduated A.M., became perpetual curate of Witton-Gilbert, two miles from Durham, where he died, at an advanced age, 24th April, 1671. He was the author of *Follie's Anatomie, or Satyres and Satyricall Epigrams, with a compendious history of Ixion's Wheele*, printed in 1619, and a reprint of which forms one of the many titles of the Percy Society to public gratitude.

Hutton was a caustic and vivid writer, and has sketched with some humour a picture of the habits and manners of his time. Many of his observations were drawn from passing events; and the incidental notices of Sir John Harington, Tom Coryat, Taylor the Water-poet, and George Wither, form not the least interesting portions of his work. *Follie's Anatomie* appears to have been Hutton's only production.

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## JOHN CLEVELAND.

(Circa 1600-1658.)

John Cleveland was born at Hinkley, in Leicestershire, of which place his father was vicar, but we do not find in what year. He received his grammatical education in the same town, under Richard Vines, a zealous puritan, and was afterwards sent to Christ's College, in Cambridge. He was soon distinguished for his uncommon abilities, more especially for his talents as an orator; and when he became of proper standing, was elected a fellow of St. John's College. He continued here about nine years, the delight and ornament of that house, says Wood; and during that time became as eminent in poetry as he was in oratory. At length, upon the breaking out of the civil war, he was the first champion that appeared in verse for the royal cause against the parliamentarians, for which he was ejected from his fellowship as soon as the reins of power came into their hands. Upon this he retired to Oxford, the king's head-quarters, as the most proper place for him to exert his wit, learning, and loyalty at. Here he began a paper war with the opposite party, and wrote some smart satires against the rebels, especially the Scots. His poem called *The Mixed Assembly*, and his *Character of a Committee Man*, are thought to contain the true spirit of satire, and a just representation of the general confusion of the times. He was so very active with these weapons, which nature and his own application had furnished him with, that he was highly respected not only by the great men of the court, but also by the wits and learned of the University. He addressed an oration, Winstanley tells us, to King Charles I., who was so well pleased with it, that he sent for him, and gave him his hand to kiss, with great expressions of kindness. When Oliver Cromwell was a candidate to represent the town of Cambridge, as Cleveland engaged all his friends and interest to oppose it, so when it was carried but by one vote, he is said to have cried out with much passion, that "that single vote had ruined the church and kingdom."

From Oxford he went to the garrison of Newark-upon-Trent, where he was so highly respected by all, especially by Sir Richard Willis, the governor, that he was made judge advocate, and so continued till the surrender of that place, showing himself, says Wood, a prudent judge for the king, and a faithful advocate for the country. While he was at Newark he drew up a bantering answer and rejoinder to a Parliament officer, who had written to him on account of one Hill, who had deserted from their side, and carried a great sum of money with him to Newark. The garrison of Newark defended



itself with much courage and resolution against the besiegers, and did not surrender but by the king's special command, after he had thrown himself into the hands of the Scots; which order of his majesty Cleveland warmly resented in a poem called *The King's Disguise*. As soon as this event took place, he was thrown into a jail at Yarmouth, where he remained for some time, under all the disadvantages of poverty and wretchedness. At last, being exhausted with the severity of the confinement, he addressed Oliver Cromwell in a petition for liberty in such pathetic and moving terms, that his heart was melted with the prisoner's expostulation, and he set him at liberty.

Having thus obtained his liberty, he retired to London, and settled himself in Gray's Inn; and as he owed his release to the Protector, he thought it his duty at least not to act against him. But Cleveland did not long enjoy this state of ease and study, for an intermitting fever seizing him, he died upon the 24th of April, 1658. On the 1st of May he was buried in the church of Saint Michael, in the city. His works, consisting of poems, characters, orations, epistles, &c., were printed (1677), with his portrait before them.

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#### JOHN PHILIPS.

(Circa 1600.)

John Philips, the maternal nephew and disciple of John Milton, "from whose education (writes Edward Phillips) as he hath received a judicious command of style both in prose and verse, so from his own natural ingenuity he hath his vein of burlesque and facetious poetry, which produced the *Satire against Hypocrites*, and the *Travestied Metaphrase of two books of Virgil*, besides what is dispersed among other things. Nevertheless, what he hath written in a serious vein of poetry, whereof very little hath yet been made public, is in my opinion nothing inferior to what he hath done in the other kind."

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#### DR. JAMES SMITH.

(1605-1667.)

"James Smith, son of Thomas Smith, rector of Merston in Bedfordshire, and brother to Dr. Thomas Smith, some time an eminent physician of Brazen-nose, was born," says Wood, "in the said town of Merston, matriculated as a member of Christ Church in Lent term,

1623, aged 18, and soon after was transplanted to Lincoln College, where he continued for some years a commoner; thence he was preferred to be chaplain at sea to Henry Earl of Holland, who was admiral of a squadron of ships sent for a supply to the Isle of Ré. Afterwards he was domestic chaplain to Thomas Earl of Cleveland, who had an especial respect for him, for his ingenuity and excellent parts. In his service he continued six years; had a benefice in Lincolnshire, which he kept for a time; and in 1633 took the degree of bachelor of divinity by accumulation, being then much in esteem with the poetical wits of that time, particularly with Philip Massinger, who called him his son; Will Davenant, John Mennis, &c. From his benefice in Lincolnshire he removed to King's Nympton in Devonshire; and leaving a curate there, he went as chaplain to the before-mentioned Earl of Holland, Lieut.-general of the English forces in the first expedition against the Scots. Returning thence soon after, he settled at King's Nympton, where he resided during all the changes of government, by compliance with the power that was uppermost. After his majesty's return, he was made one of the canons of St. Peter's Cathedral in Exeter, archdeacon of Barnstaple, chaplain to Edward Earl of Clarendon, and in July 1661 he was actually created doctor of divinity. In the next year he became chanter of Exeter, in the place of Dr. S. Ward, promoted to the episcopal see of that place; and in 1663 was presented to the rectory of Alphington, in Devonshire (at which time he resigned King's Nympton and his archdeaconry), where he finished his course. His chief works that are of poetry are in *Musarum Deliciæ, or the Muses' Recreation*, containing several pieces of poetic wit; and in *Wit Restored*, in several select poems; which book, I say, is mostly of our author Smith's composition. At the end of which is his translation, a poem called *The Innovation of Penelope and Ulysses*, a mock poem; and at the end of that, also, is Cleveland's *Rebel Scot*, translated into Latin. He also composed "certain anthems"—not the musical, but poetical part of them—which are to this day used and sung in the cathedral church at Exeter. At length, paying his last debt to nature, at Alphington, on the 20th of June, 1667, his body was conveyed to King's Nympton, before mentioned, and was buried in the chancel belonging to the church there, near to the body of Elizabeth, his first wife."\*

"Dr. Smith lived in cheerless times," adds the editor of the *Wit's Recreation* (1817), "and amongst a sour people. Mirth was then a mortal sin; and however innocent a fair, fat, laughing face might be, it was considered as the portrait of Lucifer; and poetry, except

\* Wood, *Athen. Oxon.* vol. ii.

Sternhold and Hopkins's (if that be an exception), as little less than the sign of a reprobate mind, void of all grace. It is strange that he had the hardihood to publish his poems during the usurpation; but the Restoration was at hand, when such a muse could breathe freely in an atmosphere perfectly congenial to him.

“*Lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba est,*” seems, from all we can learn of them, very applicable to our poet and his coadjutor Sir J. Mennis; and it must be owned that the admission leaves an abundance to marvel at in a ‘religious’ knight and a doctor of divinity.”

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### WILLIAM HABINGTON.

(1605-1645.)

William, eldest son of the Thomas Habington, Queen Elizabeth's godson, who was compromised by the Gunpowder-plot, was born at Hendlip, November 5, 1605, and was educated at the Jesuits' College at St. Omer's, and afterwards at Paris, with a view to induce him to take the habit of the order, which he declined. On his return from the continent, he resided principally with his father, who became his preceptor, and evidently sent him into the world a man of elegant accomplishments and virtues. Although allied to many noble families, and occasionally mixing in the gaieties of high life, his natural disposition inclined him to the pleasures of rural life. He was probably very early a poet and a lover, and in both successful. He married Lucy, daughter of William Herbert, first Lord Powis, by Eleanor, daughter of Henry Percy, eighth earl of Northumberland, by Katherine, daughter and co-heir of John Neville, Lord Latimer. It is to this lady that we are indebted for his poems, most of which were written in allusion to his courtship and marriage. She was the *Castara* who animated his imagination with tenderness and elegance, and purified it from the grosser *opprobria* of the amatory poets. His poems, as was not unusual in that age, were written occasionally, and dispersed confidentially. In 1635 they appear to have been first collected into a volume, which Oldys calls the second edition, under the title of *Castara*.

His other works are, the *Queen of Arragon*, tragi-comedy. The author having communicated the manuscript to Philip Earl of Pembroke, lord chamberlain of the household to King Charles I., he caused it to be acted, and afterwards published against the author's consent. It was revived, with the revival of the stage, at the Restoration, about the year 1666, when a new prologue and epilogue

were furnished by the author of *Hudibras*. *Observations upon History*, consisting of some particular pieces of history in the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I., &c. *The History of Edward IV.* (1640), which was written and published at the desire of Charles I. Wood insinuates that Habington "did run with the times, and was not unknown to Oliver the Usurper;" but we have no evidence of any such compliance with a system of political measures so diametrically opposite to those which we may suppose belonged to the education and principles of a Roman Catholic family. He died Nov. 13, 1645, and was buried at Hendlip in the family vault.

His poems are distinguished from those of most of his contemporaries by delicacy of sentiment, tenderness, and a natural strain of pathetic reflection. His favourite subjects, virtuous love and conjugal attachment, are agreeably varied by strokes of fancy and energies of affection. Somewhat of the extravagance of the metaphysical poets is occasionally discernible, but with very little affectation of learning, and very little effort to draw his imagery from sources with which the Muses are not familiar.

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#### EDMUND WALLER.\*

(Circa 1605-1687.)

Edmund Waller was born on the 3d of March, 1605, at Coleshill in Hertfordshire. His father was Robert Waller, Esq., of Agmondesham in Buckinghamshire, whose family was originally a branch of the Kentish Wallers; and his mother was the daughter of John Hampden, of Hampden in the same county, and sister to Hampden the zealot of rebellion.

His father died while he was yet an infant, but left him a yearly income of 3500*l.*; which, rating together the value of money and the customs of life, we may reckon more than equivalent to 10,000*l.* at the present time.

He was educated, by the care of his mother, at Eton; and removed afterwards to King's College in Cambridge. He was sent to Parliament in his 18th, if not in his 16th year, and frequented the court of James I., where he heard a very remarkable conversation, which the writer of the life prefixed to his works, who seems to have been well informed of facts, though he may sometimes err in chronology, has delivered as indubitably certain:

\* Johnson.

"He found Dr. Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Neale, Bishop of Durham, standing behind his majesty's chair; and there happened something extraordinary," continues this writer, "in the conversation those prelates had with the king, on which Mr. Waller did often reflect. His majesty asked the bishops, 'My lords, cannot I take my subjects' money when I want it, without all this formality of Parliament?' The Bishop of Durham readily answered, 'God forbid, sir, but you should; you are the breath of our nostrils.' Whereupon the king turned and said to the Bishop of Winchester, 'Well, my lord, what say you?' 'Sir,' replied the bishop, 'I have no skill to judge of parliamentary cases.' The king answered, 'No put-offs, my lord; answer me presently.' 'Then, sir,' said he, 'I think it is lawful for you to take my brother Neal's money; for he offers it.' Mr. Waller said the company was pleased with this answer, and the wit of it seemed to affect the king; for a certain lord coming in soon after, his majesty cried out, 'Oh, my lord, they say you lig with my lady.' 'No, sir,' says his lordship in confusion; 'but I like her company, because she has so much wit.' 'Why, then,' says the king, 'do you not lig with my lord of Winchester there?'"

Waller's political and poetical life began nearly together. In his eighteenth year he wrote the poem that appears first in his works, on the prince's escape "at St. Andero;" a piece which justifies the observation made by one of his editors, that he attained, by a felicity like instinct, a style which perhaps will never be obsolete; and that "were we to judge only by the wording, we could not know what was wrote at twenty and what at fourscore." His versification was, in his first essay, such as it appears in his last performance. By the perusal of Fairfax's translation of Tasso, to which, as Dryden\* relates, he confessed himself indebted for the smoothness of his numbers, and by his own nicety of observation, he had already formed such a system of metrical harmony, as he never afterwards much needed or much endeavoured to improve. Denham corrected his numbers by experience, and gained ground gradually upon the ruggedness of his age; but what was acquired by Denham was inherited by Waller.

The next poem, of which the subject seems to fix the time, is supposed by Mr. Fenton to be the *Address to the Queen*, which he considers as congratulating her arrival, in Waller's twentieth year. He is apparently mistaken; for the mention of the nation's obligations to her frequent pregnancy proves that it was written when she had brought many children. We have, therefore, no date of any other poetical production before that which the murder of the Duke of Buckingham occasioned: the steadiness with which the king re-

\* Preface to his Fables. Dr. J.

ceived the news in the chapel deserved indeed to be rescued from oblivion.

Neither of these pieces that seem to carry their own dates could have been the sudden effusion of fancy. In the verses on the prince's escape, the prediction of his marriage with the princess of France must have been written after the event; in the other, the promises of the king's kindness to the descendants of Buckingham, which could not be properly praised till it had appeared by its effects, show that time was taken for revision and improvement. It is not known that they were published till they appeared long afterwards with other poems.

Waller was not one of those idolaters of praise who cultivate their minds at the expense of their fortunes. Rich as he was by inheritance, he took care early to grow richer, by marrying Mrs. Banks, a great heiress in the city, whom the interest of the court was employed to obtain for Mr. Crofts. Having brought him a son, who died young, and a daughter, who was afterwards married to Mr. Dormer, of Oxfordshire, she died in childbed, and left him a widower of about five-and-twenty, gay and wealthy, to please himself with another marriage.

Being too young to resist beauty, and probably too vain to think himself resistible, he fixed his heart, perhaps half fondly and half ambitiously, upon the Lady Dorothea Sidney, eldest daughter of the Earl of Leicester, whom he courted by all the poetry in which *Sacharissa* is celebrated: the name is derived from the Latin appellation of *sugar*, and implies, if it mean any thing, a spiritless mildness and dull good-nature, such as excites rather tenderness than esteem, and such as, though always treated with kindness, is never honoured or admired.

Yet he describes *Sacharissa* as a sublime predominating beauty, of lofty charms and imperious influence, on whom he looks with amazement rather than fondness, whose chains he wishes, though in vain, to break, and whose presence is wine that inflames to madness.

His acquaintance with this high-born dame gave wit no opportunity of boasting its influence; she was not to be subdued by the powers of verse, but rejected his addresses, it is said, with disdain, and drove him away to solace his disappointment with *Amoret* or *Phillis*. She married in 1639 the Earl of Sunderland, who died at Newberry in the king's cause; and in her old age, meeting somewhere with Waller, asked him when he would again write such verses upon her: "When you are as young, madam," said he, "and as handsome as you were then."

In this part of his life it was that he was known to Clarendon, among the rest of the men who were eminent in that age for genius and literature; but known so little to his advantage, that they who read his character will not much condemn Sacharissa, that she did not descend from her rank to his embraces, nor think every excellence comprised in wit.

The lady, indeed, was inexorable; but his uncommon qualifications, though they had no power upon her, recommended him to the scholars and statesmen; and undoubtedly many beauties of that time, however they might receive his love, were proud of his praises. Who they were whom he dignifies with poetical names, cannot now be known. Amoret, according to Mr. Fenton, was the Lady Sophia Murray. Perhaps by traditions preserved in families more may be discovered.

From the verses written at Penshurst, it has been collected that he diverted his disappointment by a voyage; and his biographers, from his poem on the whales, think it not improbable that he visited the Bermudas; but it seems much more likely that he should amuse himself with forming an imaginary scene, than that so important an incident as a visit to America should have been left floating in conjectural probability.

From his twenty-eighth to his thirty-fifth year, he wrote his pieces on the reduction of Sallee; on the Reparation of St. Paul's; to the King on his Navy; the Panegyric on the Queen Mother; the two poems to the Earl of Northumberland; and perhaps others, of which the time cannot be discovered.

When he had lost all hopes of Sacharissa, he looked round him for an easier conquest, and gained a lady of the family of Bresse, or Breaux. The time of his marriage is not exactly known. It has not been discovered that his wife was won by his poetry; nor is any thing told of her but that she brought him many children. He doubtless praised some whom he would have been afraid to marry, and perhaps married one whom he would have been ashamed to praise. Many qualities contribute to domestic happiness, upon which poetry has no colours to bestow; and many airs and sallies may delight imagination, which he who flatters them never can approve. There are charms made only for distant admiration. No spectacle is nobler than a blaze.

Of this wife his biographers have recorded that she gave him five sons and eight daughters.

During the long interval of parliament, he is represented as living among those with whom it was most honourable to converse, and enjoying an exuberant fortune with that independence and liberty of

speech and conduct which wealth ought always to produce. He was, however, considered as the kinsman of Hampden; and was therefore supposed by the courtiers not to favour them.

When the parliament was called in 1640, it appeared that Waller's political character had not been mistaken. The king's demand of a supply produced one of those noisy speeches which disaffection and discontent regularly dictate; a speech filled with hyperbolical complaints of imaginary grievances: "They," says he, "who think themselves already undone, can never apprehend themselves in danger; and they who have nothing left can never give freely." Political truth is equally in danger from the praises of courtiers and the exclamations of patriots.

He then proceeds to rail at the clergy, being sure at that time of a favourable audience. His topic is such as will always serve its purpose,—an accusation of acting and preaching only for preferment; and he exhorts the Commons carefully to provide for their protection against pulpit law.

It always gratifies curiosity to trace a sentiment. Waller has in his speech quoted Hooker in one passage, and in another has copied him without quoting. "Religion," says Waller, "ought to be the first thing in our purpose and desires; but that which is first in dignity is not always to precede in order of time; for well-being supposes a being, and the first impediment which men naturally endeavour to remove is the want of those things without which they cannot subsist. God first assigned unto Adam maintenance of life, and gave him a title to the rest of the creatures, before he appointed a law to observe."

"God first assigned Adam," says Hooker, "maintenance of life, and then appointed him a law to observe. True it is that the kingdom of God must be the first thing in our purpose and desires; but inasmuch as a righteous life presupposeth life, inasmuch as to live virtuously it is impossible except we live,—therefore the first impediment which naturally we endeavour to remove is penury, and want of things without which we cannot live." (Book i. sect. 9.)

The speech is vehement; but the great position, that grievances ought to be redressed before supplies are granted, is agreeable enough to law and reason; nor was Waller, if his biographer may be credited, such an enemy to the king, as not to wish his distresses lightened; for he relates, "that the king sent particularly to Waller, to second his demand of some subsidies to pay off the army; and Sir Henry Vane objecting against first voting a supply, because the king would not accept unless it came up to his proportion, Mr. Waller spoke earnestly to Sir Thomas Jermyn, comptroller of the household,



to save his master from the effects of so bold a falsity ; ' for,' he said, ' I am but a country gentleman, and cannot pretend to know the king's mind.' But Sir Thomas durst not contradict the secretary ; and his son, the Earl of St. Alban's, afterwards told Mr. Waller that his father's cowardice ruined the king."

In the Long Parliament, which, unhappily for the nation, met Nov. 3, 1640, Waller represented Agmondesham the third time, and was considered by the discontented party as a man sufficiently trusty and acrimonious to be employed in managing the prosecution of Judge Crawley for his opinion in favour of ship-money ; and his speech shows that he did not disappoint their expectations. He was probably the more ardent, as his uncle Hampden had been particularly engaged in the dispute, and, by a sentence which seems generally to be thought unconstitutional, particularly injured.

He was not, however, a bigot to his party, nor adopted all their opinions. When the great question, whether episcopacy ought to be abolished, was debated, he spoke against the innovation so coolly, so reasonably, and so firmly, that it is not without great injury to his name that his speech, which was as follows, has been hitherto omitted in his works :

" There is no doubt but the sense of what this nation had suffered from the present bishops hath produced these complaints, and the apprehensions men have of suffering the like in time to come make so many desire the taking away of episcopacy ; but I conceive it is possible that we may not now take a right measure of the minds of the people by their petitions, for when they subscribed them the bishops were armed with a dangerous commission of making new canons, imposing new oaths, and the like ; but now we have disarmed them of that power. These petitioners lately did look upon episcopacy as a beast armed with horns and claws ; but now that we have cut and pared them (and may, if we see cause, yet reduce it into narrower bounds), it may, perhaps, be more agreeable. Howsoever, if they be still in passion, it becomes us soberly to consider the right use and antiquity thereof ; and not to comply further with a general desire than may stand with a general good.

" We have already showed that episcopacy and the evils thereof are mingled like water and oil ; we have also, in part, severed them ; but I believe you will find that our laws and the present government of the church are mingled like wine and water, so inseparable that the abrogation of at least a hundred of our laws is desired in these petitions. I have often heard a noble answer of the Lords commended in this House to a proposition of like nature, but of less consequence ; they gave no other reason of their refusal but this,

*nolumus mutare leges Angliæ*: it was the bishops who so answered then, and it would become the dignity and wisdom of this house to answer the people now with a *nolumus mutare*.

"I see some are moved with a number of hands against the bishops; which, I confess, rather inclines me to their defence: for I look upon episcopacy as a counterscarp or outwork, which if it be taken by this assault of the people, and withal this mystery once revealed, *that we must deny them nothing when they ask it thus in troops*, we may, in the next place, have as hard a task to defend our property as we have lately had to recover it from the prerogative. If, by multiplying hands and petitions, they prevail for an equality in things ecclesiastical, the next demand perhaps may be *lex agraria*, the like equality in things temporal.

"The Roman story tells us, 'That when the people began to flock about the senate, and were more curious to direct and know what was done than to obey, that commonwealth soon came to ruin—their *legem rogare* grew quickly to be a *legem ferre*; and after, when their legions had found that they could make a dictator, they never suffered the senate to have a voice any more in such election.'

"If these great innovations proceed, I shall expect a flat and level in learning too, as well as in church preferments: *honos alit artes*. And though it be true that grave and pious men do study for learning-sake, and embrace virtue for itself; yet it is true that youth, which is the season when learning is gotten, is not without ambition, nor will ever take pains to excel in any thing when there is not some hope of excelling others in reward and dignity.

"There are two reasons chiefly alleged against our church-government.

"First, Scripture, which, as some men think, points out another form.

"Second, The abuses of the present superiors.

"For Scripture, I will not dispute it in this place; but I am confident that, whenever an equal division of lands and goods shall be desired, there will be as many places in Scripture found out which seem to favour that, as there are now alleged against the prelacy or preferment of the church. And as for abuses, where you are now in the remonstrance told what this and that poor man hath suffered by the bishops, you may be presented with a thousand instances of poor men that have received hard measure from their landlords; and of worldly goods abused, to the injury of others and disadvantage of the owners.

"And therefore, Mr. Speaker, my humble motion is, that we may

settle men's minds herein, and, by a question, declare our resolution to reform, that is, *not to abolish episcopacy.*"\*

It cannot but be wished that he who could speak in this manner had been able to act with spirit and uniformity.

When the Commons began to set the royal authority at open defiance, Waller is said to have withdrawn from the House, and to have returned with the king's permission; and when the king set up his standard, he sent him a thousand broad-pieces. He continued, however, to sit in the rebellious conventicle; but "spoke," says Clarendon, "with great sharpness and freedom, which, now there was no danger of being outvoted, was not restrained; and therefore used as an argument against those who were gone upon pretence that they were not suffered to deliver their opinion freely in the House, which could not be believed when all men knew what liberty Mr. Waller took, and spoke every day with impunity against the sense and proceedings of the House."

Waller, as he continued to sit, was one of the commissioners nominated by the Parliament to treat with the king at Oxford; and when they were presented, the king said to him, "Though you are the last, you are not the lowest nor the least in my favour." Whitlock, who, being another of the commissioners, was witness of this kindness, imputes it to the king's knowledge of the plot in which Waller appeared afterwards to have been engaged against the Parliament. Fenton, with equal probability, believes that this attempt to promote the royal cause arose from his sensibility of the king's tenderness. Whitlock says nothing of his behaviour at Oxford: he was sent with several others to add pomp to the commission, but was not one of those to whom the trust of treating was imparted.

The engagement known by the name of Waller's plot was soon afterwards discovered. Waller had a brother-in-law, Tomkyns, who was clerk of the Queen's council, and at the same time had a very numerous acquaintance, and great influence in the city. Waller and he conversing with great confidence, told both their own secrets and those of their friends; and, surveying the wide extent of their conversation, imagined that they found in the majority of all ranks great disapprobation of the violence of the Commons, and unwillingness to continue the war. They knew that many favoured the king, whose fear concealed their loyalty; and many desired peace, though they durst not oppose the clamour for war; and they imagined that, if

\* This speech has been retrieved, from a paper printed at that time, by the writers of the Parliamentary History. Dr. J.

those who had these good intentions could be informed of their own strength, and enabled by intelligence to act together, they might overpower the fury of sedition, by refusing to comply with the ordinance for the twentieth part, and the other taxes levied for the support of the rebel army, and by uniting great numbers in a petition for peace. They proceeded with great caution. Three only met in one place, and no man was allowed to impart the plot to more than two others; so that, if any should be suspected or seized, more than three could not be endangered.

Lord Conway joined in the design, and, Clarendon imagines, incidentally mingled, as he was a soldier, some martial hopes or projects, which however were only mentioned, the main design being to bring the loyal inhabitants to the knowledge of each other; for which purpose there was to be appointed one in every district, to distinguish the friends of the king, the adherents to the Parliament, and the neutrals. How far they proceeded does not appear; the result of their inquiry, as Pym declared,\* was, that within the walls, for one that was for the Royalists, there were three against them; but that without the walls, for one that was against them, there were five for them. Whether this was said from knowledge or guess, was perhaps never inquired.

It is the opinion of Clarendon, that in Waller's plan no violence or sanguinary resistance was comprised; that he intended only to abate the confidence of the rebels by public declarations, and to weaken their power by a opposition to new supplies. This in calmer times, and more than this, is done without fear; but such was the acrimony of the Commons, that no method of obstructing them was safe.

About this time another design was formed by Sir Nicholas Crispe, a man of loyalty that deserves perpetual remembrance: when he was a merchant in the city, he gave and procured the king, in his exigencies, an hundred thousand pounds; and, when he was driven from the Exchange, raised a regiment and commanded it.

Sir Nicholas flattered himself with an opinion, that some provocation would so much exasperate, or some opportunity so much encourage, the king's friends in the city, that they would break out in open resistance, and would then want only a lawful standard and an authorised commander; and extorted from the king, whose judgment too frequently yielded to importunity, a commission of array, directed to such as he thought proper to nominate, which was sent to London by the Lady Aubigny. She knew not what she carried,

\* Parliamentary History, vol xli. Dr. J.

but was to deliver it on the communication of a certain token which Sir Nicholas imparted.

This commission could be only intended to lie ready till the time should require it. To have attempted to raise any forces, would have been certain destruction; it could be of use only when the forces should appear. This was, however, an act preparatory to martial hostility. Crispe would undoubtedly have put an end to the session of Parliament, had his strength been equal to his zeal; and out of the design of Crispe, which involved very little danger, and that of Waller, which was an act purely civil, they compounded a horrid and dreadful plot.

The discovery of Waller's design is variously related. In *Clarendon's History* it is told, that a servant of Tomkyns, lurking behind the hangings when his master was in conference with Waller, heard enough to qualify him for an informer, and carried his intelligence to Pym. A manuscript, quoted in the *Life of Waller*, relates, that "he was betrayed by his sister Price, and her Presbyterian chaplain Mr. Goode, who stole some of his papers; and if he had not strangely dreamed the night before that his sister had betrayed him, and thereupon burnt the rest of his papers by the fire that was in his chimney, he had certainly lost his life by it." The question cannot be decided. It is not unreasonable to believe that the men in power, receiving intelligence from the sister, would employ the servant of Tomkyns to listen at the conference, that they might avoid an act so offensive as that of destroying the brother by the sister's testimony.

The plot was published in the most terrific manner.

On the 31st of May, 1643, at a solemn fast, when they were listening to the sermon, a messenger entered the church, and communicated his errand to Pym, who whispered it to others that were placed near him, and then went with them out of the church, leaving the rest in solicitude and amazement. They immediately sent guards to proper places, and that night apprehended Tomkyns and Waller; having yet traced nothing but that letters had been intercepted, from which it appears that the Parliament and the city were soon to be delivered into the hands of the cavaliers.

They perhaps yet knew little themselves beyond some general and indistinct notices. "But Waller," says Clarendon, "was so confounded with fear, that he confessed whatever he had heard, thought, or seen; all that he knew of himself, and all that he suspected of others, without concealing any person of what degree or quality soever, or any discourse which he had ever upon any occasion entertained with them: what such and such ladies of great honour, to whom, upon the credit of his wit and great reputation, he had been admitted, had

spoke to him in their chambers upon the proceedings in the houses, and how they had encouraged him to oppose them; what correspondence and intercourse they had with some ministers of state at Oxford, and how they had conveyed all intelligence thither." He accused the Earl of Portland and Lord Conway as co-operating in the transaction; and testified that the Earl of Northumberland had declared himself disposed in favour of any attempt that might check the violence of the Parliament, and reconcile them to the king.

He undoubtedly confessed much which they could never have discovered, and perhaps somewhat they would wished to have been suppressed; for it is inconvenient, in the conflict of factions, to have that disaffection known which cannot safely be punished.

Tomkyns was seized on the same night with Waller, and appears likewise to have partaken of his cowardice; for he gave notice of Crispe's commission of array, of which Clarendon never knew how it was discovered. Tomkyns had been sent with the token appointed, to demand it from Lady Aubigny, and had buried it in his garden, where, by his direction, it was dug up; and thus the rebels obtained what Clarendon confesses them to have had, the original copy.

It can raise no wonder that they formed one plot out of these two designs, however remote from each other, when they saw the same agent employed in both, and found the commission of array in the hands of him who was employed in collecting the opinions and affections of the people.

Of the plot, thus combined, they took care to make the most. They sent Pym among the citizens to tell them of their imminent danger and happy escape, and inform them that the design was "to seize the lord mayor and all the committee of militia, and would not spare one of them." They drew up a vow and covenant to be taken by every member of either house, by which he declared his detestation of all conspiracies against the Parliament, and his resolution to detect and oppose them. They then appointed a day of thanksgiving for this wonderful delivery, which shut out, says Clarendon, all doubts whether there had been such a deliverance, and whether the plot was real or fictitious.

On June 11 the Earl of Portland and Lord Conway were committed, one to the custody of the mayor, and the other of the sheriff; but their lands and goods were not seized.

Waller was still to immerse himself deeper in ignominy. The Earl of Portland and Lord Conway denied the charge; and there was no evidence against them but the confession of Waller, of which undoubtedly many would be inclined to question the veracity. With these doubts he was so much terrified, that he endeavoured to per-

sua~~d~~e Portland to a declaration like his own, by a letter extant in Fenton's edition. "But for me," says he, "you had never known any thing of this business, which was prepared for another; and therefore I cannot imagine why you should hide it so far as to contract your own ruin by concealing it, and persisting unreasonably to hide that truth, which without you already is, and will every day be made more manifest. Can you imagine yourself bound in honour to keep that secret which is already revealed by another? or possible it should still be a secret which is known to one of the other sex? If you persist to be cruel to yourself for their sakes who deserve it not, it will nevertheless be made appear ere long, I fear, to your ruin. Surely, if I had the happiness to wait on you, I could move you to compassionate both yourself and me, who, desperate as my case is, am desirous to die with the honour of being known to have declared the truth. You have no reason to contend to hide what is already revealed, inconsiderately to throw away yourself for the interest of others, to whom you are less obliged than you are aware of."

This persuasion seems to have had little effect. Portland sent (June 29) a letter to the Lords to tell them that he "is in custody, as he conceives, without any charge; and that, by what Mr. Waller had threatened him with since he was imprisoned, he doth apprehend a very cruel, long, and ruinous restraint: he therefore prays that he may not find the effects of Mr. Waller's threats, a long and close imprisonment, but may be speedily brought to a legal trial; and then he is confident the vanity and falsehood of those informations which have been given against him will appear."

In consequence of this letter, the Lords ordered Portland and Waller to be confronted; when the one repeated his charge, and the other his denial. The examination of the plot being continued (July 1), Thinn, usher of the House of Lords, deposed that Mr. Waller having had a conference with the Lord Portland in an upper room, Lord Portland said, when he came down, "Do me the favour to tell my Lord Northumberland, that Mr. Waller has extremely pressed me to save my own life and his, by throwing the blame upon the Lord Conway and the Earl of Northumberland."

Waller, in his letter to Portland, tells him of the reasons which he could urge with resistless efficacy in a personal conference; but he overrated his own oratory; his vehemence, whether of persuasion or entreaty, was returned with contempt.

One of his arguments with Portland is, that the plot is already known to a woman. This woman was doubtless Lady Aubigny, who, upon this occasion, was committed to custody, but who, in reality, when she delivered the commission, knew not what it was.

The Parliament then proceeded against the conspirators, and committed their trial to a council of war. Tomkyns and Chaloner were hanged near their own doors. Tomkyns, when he came to die, said it was a foolish business; and indeed there seems to have been no hope that it should escape discovery; for though never more than three met at a time, yet a design so extensive must, by necessity, be communicated to many, who could not be expected to be all faithful and all prudent. Chaloner was attended at his execution by Hugh Peters. His crime was, that he had commission to raise money for the king; but it appears not that the money was to be expended upon the advancement of either Crispe's or Waller's plot.

The Earl of Northumberland, being too great for prosecution, was only once examined before the Lords. The Earl of Portland and Lord Conway, persisting to deny the charge, and no testimony but Waller's yet appearing against them, were, after a long imprisonment, admitted to bail. Hassel, the king's messenger, who carried the letters to Oxford, died the night before his trial. Hampden escaped death, perhaps by the interest of his family, but was kept in prison to the end of his life. They whose names were inserted in the commission of array were not capitally punished, as it could not be proved that they had consented to their own nomination; but they were considered as malignants, and their estates were seized.

"Waller, though confessedly," says Clarendon, "the most guilty, with incredible dissimulation affected such a remorse of conscience, that his trial was put off, out of Christian compassion, till he might recover his understanding." What use he made of this interval, with what liberality and success he distributed flattery and money, and how, when he was brought (July 4) before the House, he confessed and lamented, and submitted and implored, may be read in the *History of the Rebellion* (b. vii.). The speech, to which Clarendon ascribes the preservation of his dear-bought life, is inserted in his works. The great historian, however, seems to have been mistaken in relating that he prevailed in the principal part of his supplication, not to be tried by a council of war; for according to Whitlock, he was by expulsion from the house abandoned to the tribunal which he so much dreaded, and being tried and condemned, was reprieved by Essex; but after a year's imprisonment, in which time resentment grew less acrimonious, paying a fine of ten thousand pounds, he was permitted to recollect himself in another country.

Of his behaviour in this part of his life, it is not necessary to direct the reader's opinion. "Let us not," says his last ingenious



biographer,\* "condemn him with untempered severity, because he was not a prodigy which the world hath seldom seem, because his character included not the poet, the orator, and the hero."

For the place of his exile he chose France, and stayed some time at Rouen, where his daughter Margaret was born, who was afterwards his favourite and his amanuensis. He then removed to Paris, where he lived with great splendour and hospitality; and from time to time amused himself with poetry, in which he sometimes speaks of the rebels and their usurpation in the natural language of an honest man.

At last it became necessary, for his support, to sell his wife's jewels; and being reduced, as he said, at last to the rump-jewel, he solicited Cromwell permission to return, and obtained it by the interest of Colonel Scroop, to whom his sister was married. Upon the remains of a fortune which the danger of his life had very much diminished, he lived at Hallbarn, a house built by himself, very near to Beaconsfield, where his mother resided. His mother, though related to Cromwell and Hampden, was zealous for the royal cause, and when Cromwell visited her, used to reproach him; he, in return, would throw a napkin at her, and say he would not dispute with his aunt; but finding in time that she acted for the king as well as talked, he made her a prisoner to her own daughter, in her own house. If he would do any thing, he could not do less.

Cromwell, now Protector, received Waller, as his kinsman, to familiar conversation. Waller, as he used to relate, found him sufficiently versed in ancient history; and when any of his enthusiastic friends came to advise or consult him, could sometimes overhear him discoursing in the cant of the times; but when he returned, he would say, "Cousin Waller, I must talk to these men in their own way:" and resumed the common style of conversation.

He repaid the Protector for his favours (1654) by the famous Panegyric, which has been always considered as the first of his poetical productions. His choice of encomiastic topics is very judicious; for he considers Cromwell in his exaltation, without inquiring how he attained it; there is, consequently, no mention of the rebel or the regicide. All the former part of his hero's life is veiled with shades; and nothing is brought to view but the chief, the governor, the defender of England's honour, and the enlarger of her dominion. The act of violence by which he obtained

\* Life of Waller, prefixed to an edition of his works published in 1773 by Percival Stockdale. C.

the supreme power is lightly treated and decently justified. It was certainly to be desired that the detestable band should be dissolved, which had destroyed the Church, murdered the king, and filled the nation with tumult and oppression ; yet Cromwell had not the right of dissolving them, for all that he had before done could be justified only by supposing them invested with lawful authority. But combinations of wickedness would overwhelm the world by the advantage which licentious principles afford, did not those who have long practised perfidy grow faithless to each other.

In the poem on the war with Spain are some passages at least equal to the best parts of the panegyric ; and in the conclusion, the poet ventures yet a higher flight of flattery, by recommending royalty to Cromwell and the nation. Cromwell was very desirous, as appears from his conversation, related by Whitlock, of adding the title to the power of monarchy, and is supposed to have been withheld from it partly by fear of the army, and partly by fear of the laws, which, when he should govern by the name of king, would have restrained his authority. When, therefore, a deputation was solemnly sent to invite him to the crown, he, after a long conference, refused it ; but is said to have fainted in his coach when he parted from them.

The poem on the death of the Protector seems to have been dictated by real veneration for his memory. Dryden and Sprat wrote on the same occasion ; but they were young men, struggling into notice, and hoping for some favour from the ruling party. Waller had little to expect ; he had received nothing but his pardon from Cromwell, and was not likely to ask any thing from those who should succeed him.

Soon afterwards, the Restoration supplied him with another subject ; and he exerted his imagination, his elegance, and his melody, with equal alacrity, for Charles II. It is not possible to read, without some contempt and indignation, poems of the same author, ascribing the highest degree of *power and piety* to Charles I., then transferring the same *power and piety* to Oliver Cromwell ; now inviting Oliver to take the crown, and then congratulating Charles II. on his recovered right. Neither Cromwell nor Charles could value his testimony as the effect of conviction, or receive his praises as effusions of reverence ; they could consider them but as the labour of invention, and the tribute of dependence.

Poets, indeed, profess fiction ; but the legitimate end of fiction is the conveyance of truth ; and he that has flattery ready for all whom the vicissitudes of the world happen to exalt, must be scorned as a prostituted mind, that may retain the glitter of wit, but has lost the dignity of virtue.

The Congratulation was considered as inferior in poetical merit to the Panegyric; and it is reported that, when the king told Waller of the disparity, he answered, "Poets, sir, succeed better in fiction than in truth."

The Congratulation is indeed not inferior to the Panegyric either by decay of genius or for want of diligence, but because Cromwell had done much, and Charles had done little. Cromwell wanted nothing to raise him to heroic excellence but virtue; and virtue his poet thought himself at liberty to supply. Charles had yet only the merit of struggling without success, and suffering without despair. A life of escapes and indigence could supply poetry with no splendid images.

In the first parliament summoned by Charles II. (March 8, 1661), Waller sat for Hastings in Sussex, and served for different places in all the parliaments in that reign. In a time when fancy and gaiety were the most powerful recommendations to regard, it is not likely that Waller was forgotten. He passed his time in the company that was highest both in rank and wit, from which even his obstinate sobriety did not exclude him. Though he drank water, he was enabled by his fertility of mind to heighten the mirth of bacchanalian assemblies: and Mr. Saville said, that "no man in England should keep him company without drinking but Ned Waller."

The praise given him by St. Evremond is a proof of his reputation; for it was only by his reputation that he could be known as a writer to a man who, though he lived a great part of a long life upon an English pension, never condescended to understand the language of the nation that maintained him.

In parliament, "he was," says Burnet, "the delight of the house; and though old, said the liveliest things of any among them." This, however, is said in his account of the year '75, when Waller was only 70. His name as a speaker occurs often in Grey's *Collections*; but I have found no extracts that can be more quoted as exhibiting sallies of gaiety than cogency of argument.

He was of such consideration, that his remarks were circulated and recorded. When the Duke of York's influence was high, both in Scotland and England, it drew, says Burnet, a lively reflection from Waller, the celebrated wit. He said, "the House of Commons had resolved that the duke should not reign after the king's death; but the king, in opposition to them, had resolved that he should reign even in his life." If there appear no extraordinary liveliness in this remark, yet its reception proves the speaker to have been a celebrated wit, to have had a name which men of wit were proud of mentioning.

He did not suffer his reputation to die gradually away, which may

easily happen in a long life; but renewed his claim to poetical distinction from time to time, as occasions were offered, either by public events or private incidents; and contenting himself with the influence of his Muse, or loving quiet better than influence, he never accepted any office of magistracy.

He was not, however, without some attention to his fortune; for he asked from the king (in 1665) the provostship of Eton college, and obtained it; but Clarendon refused to put the seal to the grant, alleging that it could be held only by a clergyman. It is known that Sir Henry Wotton qualified himself for it by deacon's orders.

To this opposition, the *Biographia* imputes the violence and acrimony with which Waller joined Buckingham's faction in the prosecution of Clarendon. The motive was illiberal and dishonest, and showed that more than sixty years had not been able to teach him morality. His accusation is such as conscience can hardly be supposed to dictate without the help of malice. "We were to be governed by Janizaries instead of Parliaments, and are in danger from a worse plot than that of the 5th of November: then, if the Lords and Commons had been destroyed, there had been a succession; but here both had been destroyed for ever." This is the language of a man who is glad of an opportunity to rail, and ready to sacrifice truth to interest at one time, and to anger at another.

A year after the Chancellor's banishment, another vacancy gave him encouragement for another petition, which the king referred to the council, who, after hearing the question argued by lawyers for three days, determined that the office could be held only by a clergyman, according to the Act of Uniformity, since the provosts had always received institution as for a parsonage from the bishops of Lincoln. The king then said, he could not break the law which he had made; and Dr. Zachary Cradock, famous for a single sermon, at most for two sermons, was chosen by the fellows.

That he asked any thing more is not known. It is certain that he obtained nothing, though he continued obsequious to the court through the rest of Charles's reign.

At the accession of King James (in 1685) he was chosen for parliament (being then fourscore) at Saltash, in Cornwall, and wrote a *Presage of the Downfall of the Turkish Empire*, which he presented to the king on his birthday. It is remarked by his commentator Fenton, that in reading Tasso he had early imbibed a veneration for the heroes of the holy war, and a zealous enmity to the Turks, which never left him. James, however, having soon after begun what he thought a holy war at home, made haste to put all molestation of the Turks out of his power.

James treated him with kindness and familiarity, of which instances are given by the writer of his life. One day taking him into the closet, the king asked him how he liked one of the pictures. "My eyes," said Waller, "are dim, and I do not know it." The king said it was the Princess of Orange. "She is," said Waller, "like the greatest woman in the world." The king asked who was that, and was answered, Queen Elizabeth. "I wonder," said the king, "you should think so; but I must confess she had a wise council." "And, sir," said Waller, "did you ever know a fool choose a wise one?" Such is the story, which I once heard of some other man. Pointed axioms and acute replies fly loose about the world, and are assigned successively to those whom it may be the fashion to celebrate.

When the king knew that he was about to marry his daughter to Dr. Birch, a clergyman, he ordered a French gentleman to tell him that "the king wondered he could think of marrying his daughter to a falling church." "The king," said Waller, "does me great honour in taking notice of my domestic affairs; but I have lived long enough to observe that this falling church has got a trick of rising again."

He took notice to his friends of the king's conduct, and said that "he would be left like a whale upon the strand." Whether he was privy to any of the transactions which ended in the Revolution is not known. His heir joined the Prince of Orange.

Having now attained an age beyond which the laws of nature seldom suffer life to be extended, otherwise than by a future state, he seems to have turned his mind upon preparation for the decisive hour, and therefore consecrated his poetry to devotion. It is pleasing to discover that his piety was without weakness; that his intellectual powers continued vigorous; and that the lines which he composed when he, for age, could neither read nor write, are not inferior to the effusions of his youth.

Towards the decline of life he bought a small house, with a little land, at Coleshill, and said "he should be glad to die, like the stag, where he was roused." This, however, did not happen. When he was at Beaconsfield, he found his legs grow tumid. He went to Windsor, where Sir Charles Scarborough then attended the king, and requested him, as both a friend and a physician, to tell him what that swelling meant. "Sir," answered Scarborough, "your blood will run no longer." Waller repeated some lines of Virgil, and went home to die.

As the disease increased upon him, he composed himself for his departure; and calling upon Dr. Birch to give him the holy sacrament, he desired his children to take it with him, and made an earnest declaration of his faith in Christianity. It now appeared what

part of his conversation with the great could be remembered with delight. He related, that being present when the Duke of Buckingham talked profanely before King Charles, he said to him, "My lord, I am a great deal older than your grace, and have, I believe, heard more arguments for atheism than ever your grace did; but I have lived long enough to see there is nothing in them; and so I hope your grace will."

He died October 21st, 1687, and was buried at Beaconsfield, with a monument erected by his son's executors, for which Rymer wrote the inscription, and which I hope is now rescued from dilapidation.

He left several children by his second wife, of whom his daughter was married to Dr. Birch. Benjamin, the eldest son, was disinherited, and sent to New Jersey, as wanting common understanding; Edmund, the second son, inherited the estate, and represented Agmondesham in Parliament, but at last turned Quaker; William, the third son, was a merchant in London; Stephen, the fourth, was an eminent doctor of laws, and one of the commissioners for the Union. There is said to have been a fifth, of whom no account has descended.

The character of Waller, both moral and intellectual, has been drawn by Clarendon, to whom he was familiarly known, with nicety, which certainly none to whom he was not known can presume to emulate. It is therefore inserted here, with such remarks as others have supplied; after which nothing remains but a critical examination of his poetry.

"Edmund Waller," says Clarendon, "was born to a very fair estate, by the parsimony or frugality of a wise father and mother; and he thought it so commendable an advantage, that he resolved to improve it with his utmost care, upon which in his nature he was too much intent; and in order to that, he was so much reserved and retired, that he was scarcely ever heard of, till by his address and dexterity he had gotten a very rich wife in the city, against all the recommendation, and countenance, and authority of the court, which was thoroughly engaged on the behalf of Mr. Crofts, and which used to be successful in that age against any opposition. He had the good fortune to have an alliance and friendship with Dr. Morley, who had assisted and instructed him in the reading many good books, to which his natural parts and promptitude inclined him, especially the poets; and at the age when other men used to give over writing verses (for he was near thirty years when he first engaged himself in that exercise, at least that he was known to do so), he surprised the town with two or three pieces of that kind, as if a tenth Muse had been newly born to cherish drooping poetry. The Doctor at that time brought him into that company which was most celebrated for good conversa-

tion, where he was received and esteemed with great applause and respect. He was a very pleasant discourses in earnest and in jest, and therefore very grateful to all kind of company, where he was not the less esteemed for being very rich.

“He had been even nursed in parliaments, where he sat when he was very young; and so when they were resumed again (after a long intermission), he appeared in those assemblies with great advantage: having a graceful way of speaking; and by thinking much on several arguments (which his temper and complexion, that had much of melancholic, inclined him to), he seemed often to speak upon the sudden, when the occasion had only administered the opportunity of saying what he had thoroughly considered, which gave a great lustre to all he said, which yet was rather of delight than weight. There needs no more be said to extol the excellence and power of his wit and pleasantness of his conversation, than that it was of magnitude enough to cover a world of very great faults; that is, so to cover them, that they were not taken notice of to his reproach, viz. a narrowness in his nature to the lowest degree; an abjectness and want of courage to support him in any virtuous undertaking; an insinuation and servile flattery to the height the vainest and most imperious nature could be contented with, that it preserved and won his life from those who were most resolved to take it, and in an occasion in which he ought to have been ambitious to have lost it, and then preserved him again from the reproach and the contempt that was due to him for so preserving it, and for vindicating it at such a price that it had power to reconcile him to those whom he had most offended and provoked; and continued to his age with that rare felicity, that his company was acceptable where his spirit was odious; and he was at least pitied where he was most detested.”

Such is the account of Clarendon; on which it may not be improper to make some remarks.

“He was very little known till he had obtained a rich wife in the city.”

He obtained a rich wife about the age of three-and-twenty, an age before which few men are conspicuous much to their advantage.

He was known, however, in parliament and at court; and if he spent part of his time in privacy, it is not unreasonable to suppose that he endeavoured the improvement of his mind as well as of his fortune.

That Clarendon might misjudge the motive of his retirement is the more probable, because he has evidently mistaken the commencement of his poetry, which he supposes him not to have attempted before thirty. As his first pieces were perhaps not printed, the suc-

cession of his compositions was not known ; and Clarendon, who cannot be imagined to have been very studious of poetry, did not rectify his first opinion by consulting Waller's book.

Clarendon observes, that he was introduced to the wits of the age by Dr. Morley ; but the writer of his life relates that he was already among them, when, hearing a noise in the street, and inquiring the cause, they found a son of Ben Jonson under an arrest. This was Morley, whom Waller set free at the expense of one hundred pounds, took him into the country as director of his studies, and then procured him admission into the company of the friends of literature. Of this fact Clarendon had a nearer knowledge than the biographer, and is therefore more to be credited.

The account of Waller's parliamentary eloquence is seconded by Burnet ; who, though he calls him "the delight of the House," adds, that "he was only concerned to say that which should make him be applauded ; he never laid the business of the House to heart, being a vain and empty, though a witty man."

Of his insinuation and flattery it is not unreasonable to believe that the truth is told. Ascham, in his elegant description of those whom in modern language we term wits, says, that they are open flatterers and privy mockers. Waller showed a little of both, when, upon sight of the Duchess of Newcastle's verses on the death of a stag, he declared that he would give all his own compositions to have written them ; and being charged with the exorbitance of his adulation, answered, that "nothing was too much to be given, that a lady might be saved from the disgrace of such a vile performance." This, however, was no very mischievous or very unusual deviation from truth : had his hypocrisy been confined to such transactions, he might have been forgiven, though not praised ; for who forbears to flatter an author or a lady ?

Of the laxity of his political principles, and the weakness of his resolution, he experienced the natural effect, by losing the esteem of every party. From Cromwell he had only his recal ; and from Charles II., who delighted in his company, he obtained only the pardon of his relation Hampden, and the safety of Hampden's son.

As far as conjecture can be made from the whole of his writing and his conduct, he was habitually and deliberately a friend to monarchy. His deviation towards democracy proceeded from his connection with Hampden, for whose sake he prosecuted Crawley with great bitterness ; and the invective which he pronounced on that occasion was so popular, that twenty thousand copies are said by his biographer to have been sold in one day.

It is confessed that his faults still left him many friends, at least



many companions. His convivial power of pleasing is universally acknowledged; but those who conversed with him intimately found him not only passionate, especially in his old age, but resentful, so that the interposition of friends was sometimes necessary.

His wit and his poetry naturally connected him with the polite writers of his time: he was joined with Lord Buckhurst in the translation of Corneille's *Pompey*; and is said to have added his help to that of Cowley in the original draught of the *Rehearsal*.

The care of his fortune, which Clarendon imputes to him in a degree little less than criminal, was either not constant or not successful; for, having inherited a patrimony of 3500*l.* a year in the time of James I., and augmented it at least by one wealthy marriage, he left, about the time of the Revolution, an income of not more than twelve or thirteen hundred; which, when the different value of money is reckoned, will be found perhaps not more than a fourth part of what he once possessed.

Of this diminution, part was the consequence of the gifts which he was forced to scatter, and the fine which he was condemned to pay at the detection of his plot; and if his estate, as is related in his life, was sequestered, he had probably contracted debts when he lived in exile; for we are told that at Paris he lived in splendour, and was the only Englishman, except the Lord St. Alban's, that kept a table.

His unlucky plot compelled him to sell a thousand a year; of the waste of the rest there is no account, except that he is confessed by his biographer to have been a bad economist. He seems to have deviated from the common practice; to have been a hoarder in his first years, and a squanderer in his last.

Of his course of studies or choice of books, nothing is known more than that he professed himself unable to read Chapman's translation of Homer without rapture. His opinion concerning the duty of a poet is contained in his declaration, that "he would blot from his works any line that did not contain some motive to virtue."

The characters by which Waller intended to distinguish his writing are sprightliness and dignity; in his smallest pieces he endeavours to be gay, in the larger to be great. Of his airy and light productions the chief source is gallantry, that attentive reverence of female excellence which has descended to us from the Gothic ages. As his poems are commonly occasional, and his addresses personal, he was not so liberally supplied with grand as with soft images; for beauty is more easily found than magnanimity.

The delicacy which he cultivated restrains him to a certain nicety and caution, even when he writes upon the slightest matter. *He has therefore, in his whole volume, nothing burlesque, and seldom*

any thing ludicrous or familiar. He seems always to do his best, though his subjects are often unworthy of his care.

It is not easy to think without some contempt on an author who is growing illustrious in his own opinion by verses, at one time, "To a Lady who can do any thing but sleep when she pleases;" at another, "To a Lady who can sleep when she pleases;" now, "To a Lady on her passing through a crowd of people;" then, "On a braid of divers colours woven by four Ladies;" "On a tree cut in paper;" or, "To a Lady from whom he received the copy of verses on the paper-tree, which for many years had been missing."

Genius now and then produces a lucky trifle. We still read the *Dove* of Anacreon, and *Sparrow* of Catullus; and a writer naturally pleases himself with a performance which owes nothing to the subject. But compositions merely pretty have the fate of other pretty things, and are quitted in time for something useful; they are flowers fragrant and fair, but of short duration; or they are blossoms to be valued only as they foretell fruits.

Among Waller's little poems are some which their excellency ought to secure from oblivion; as, *To Amoret*, comparing the different modes of regard with which he looks on her and Sacharissa; and the verses *On Love*, that begin "Anger in hasty words or blows."

In others he is not equally successful; sometimes his thoughts are deficient, and sometimes his expression.

The numbers are not always musical; as,

" Fair Venus, in thy soft arms  
The god of rage confine;  
For thy whispers are the charms  
Which only can divert his fierce design.  
What though he frown, and to tumult do incline?  
Thou the flame  
Kindled in his breast canst tame  
With that snow which unmelted lies on thine."

He seldom indeed fetches an amorous sentiment from the depths of science; his thoughts are for the most part easily understood, and his images such as the superficies of nature readily supplies; he has a just claim to popularity, because he writes to common degrees of knowledge; and is free at least from philosophical pedantry, unless perhaps the end of a song *To the Sun* may be excepted, in which he is too much a Copernican. To which may be added the simile of the psalm in the verses "on her passing through a crowd;" and a line in a more serious poem on the Restoration, about vipers and treacle, which can only be understood by those who happen to know the composition of the *Theriaca*.

His thoughts are sometimes hyperbolic, and his images unnatural :

“ The plants admire,  
No less than those of old did Orpheus' lyre :  
If she sit down, with tops all tow'rds her bow'd ;  
They round about her into arbours crowd :  
Or if she walks, in even ranks they stand,  
Like some well-marshall'd and obsequious band.”

In another place :

“ While in the park I sing, the listening deer  
Attend my passion, and forget to fear :  
When to the beeches I report my flame,  
They bow their heads, as if they felt the same.  
To Gods appealing, when I reach their bowers,  
With loud complaints they answer me in showers.  
To thee a wild and cruel soul is given,  
More deaf than trees, and prouder than the Heaven !”

On the head of a stag :

“ O fertile head ! which every year  
Could such a crop of wonder bear !  
The teeming earth did never bring  
So soon so hard, so huge a thing :  
Which might it never have been cast,  
Each year's growth added to the last,  
These lofty branches had supplied  
The earth's bold son's prodigious pride ;  
Heaven with these engines had been scal'd,  
When mountains heap'd on mountain's fail'd.”

Sometimes, having succeeded in the first part, he makes a feeble conclusion. In the song of *Sacharissa's and Amoret's Friendship*, the two last stanzas ought to have been omitted.

His images of gallantry are not always in the highest degree delicate :

“ Then shall my love this doubt displace,  
And gain such trust that I may come  
And banquet sometimes on thy face,  
But make my constant meals at home.”

Some applications may be thought too remote and unsequential, as in the verses on the *Lady dancing* :

“ The sun in figures such as these  
Joys with the moon to play :  
To the sweet strains they advance,  
Which do result from their own spheres ;  
As this nymph's dance  
Moves with the numbers which she hears.”

Sometimes a thought, which might perhaps fill a distich, is expanded and attenuated till it grows weak and almost evanescent :

“ Chloris ! since first our calm of peace  
Was frighted hence, this good we find,  
Your favours with your fears increase,  
And growing mischiefs make you kind.  
So the fair tree, which still preserves  
Her fruit and state while no wind blows,  
In storms from that uprightness swerves,  
And the glad earth about her strows  
With treasure from her yielding boughs.”

His images are not always distinct ; as, in the following passage, he confounds *love* as a person with *love* as a passion :

“ Some other nymphs, with colours faint  
And pencil slow, may Cupid paint,  
And a weak heart in time destroy ;  
She has a stamp, and prints the boy :  
Can, with a single look, inflame  
The coldest breast, the rudest tame.”

His sallies of casual flattery are sometimes elegant and happy, as that *In return for the Silver Pen* ; and sometimes empty and trifling, as that upon *The Card torn by the Queen*. There are a few lines written in *The Duchess's Tasso*, which he is said by Fenton to have kept a summer under correction. It happened to Waller, as to others, that his success was not always in proportion to his labour.

Of these petty compositions, neither the beauties nor the faults deserve much attention. The amorous verses have this to recommend them, that they are less hyperbolic than those of some other poets. Waller is not always at the last gasp ; he does not die of a frown, nor live upon a smile. There is, however, too much love, and too many trifles. Little things are made too important ; and the empire of beauty is represented as exerting its influence farther than can be allowed by the multiplicity of human passions, and the variety of human wants. Such books, therefore, may be considered as showing the world under a false appearance ; and so far as they obtain credit from the young and unexperienced, as misleading expectation, and misguiding practice.

Of his nobler and more weighty performances, the greater part is panegyrical ; for of praise he was very lavish, as is observed by his imitator Lord Lansdowne :

“ No satyr stalks within the hallowed ground,  
But queens and heroines, kings and gods abound ;  
Glory and arms and love are all the sound.”

In the first poem, on *The Danger of the Prince on the Coast of Spain*, there is a puerile and ridiculous mention of Arion at the beginning ; and the last paragraph, on the cable, is in part ridiculously mean, and in part ridiculously tumid. The poem, however, is such as may be justly praised, without much allowance for the state of our poetry and language at that time.

The two next poems are upon *The King's Behaviour at the Death of Buckingham*, and upon his *Navy*.

He has, in the first, used the Pagan deities with great propriety :

“ ’Twas want of such a precedent as this  
Made the old heathens frame their gods amiss.”

In the poem on the *Navy*, those lines are very noble which suppose the king's power secure against a second deluge ; so noble, that it were almost criminal to remark the mistake of *centre* for *surface*, or to say that the empire of the sea would be worth little if it were not that the waters terminate in land.

The poem upon *Sallee* has forcible sentiments ; but the conclusion is feeble. That on *The Repairs of St. Paul's* has something vulgar and obvious, such as the mention of Amphiön ; and something violent and harsh, as,

“ So all our minds with his conspire to grace  
The Gentiles' great Apostle, and deface  
Those state-obscuring sheds, that like a chain  
Seem'd to confine and fetter him again ;  
Which the glad saint shakes off at his command,  
As once the viper from his sacred hand :  
So joys the aged oak, when we divide  
The creeping ivy from his injured side.”

Of the last two couplets, the first is extravagant, and the second mean.

His praise of the queen is too much exaggerated ; and the thought, that she “ saves lovers by cutting off hope, as gangrenes are cured by lopping the limb,” presents nothing to the mind but disgust and horror.

Of *The Battle of the Summer Islands*, it seems not easy to say whether it is intended to raise terror or merriment. The beginning is too splendid for jest, and the conclusion too light for seriousness. The versification is studied, the scenes are diligently displayed, and the images artfully amplified ; but as it ends neither in joy nor sorrow, it will scarcely be read a second time.

*The Panegyric* upon Cromwell has obtained from the public a very liberal dividend of praise, which, however, cannot be said to have been unjustly lavished, for such a series of verses had rarely appeared

before in the English language. Of the lines, some are grand, some are graceful, and all are musical. There is now and then a feeble verse, or a trifling thought; but its great fault is the choice of its hero.

The poem of *The War with Spain* begins with lines more vigorous and striking than Waller is accustomed to produce. The succeeding parts are variegated with better passages and worse. There is something too far-fetched in the comparison of the Spaniards drawing the English on, by saluting St. Lucar with cannon, *to lambs awakening the lion by bleating*. The fate of the marquis and his lady, who were burnt in their ship, would have moved more, had the poet not made him die like the phoenix, because he had spices about him, nor expressed their affection and their end by a conceit at once false and vulgar :

“ Alive, in equal flames of love they burn’d,  
And now together are to ashes turn’d.”

The verses to Charles on his return were doubtless intended to counterbalance the panegyric on Cromwell. If it has been thought inferior to that with which it is naturally compared, the cause of its deficiency has been already remarked.

The remaining pieces it is not necessary to examine singly. They must be supposed to have faults and beauties of the same kind with the rest. The sacred poems, however, deserve particular regard; they were the work of Waller’s declining life, of those hours in which he looked upon the fame and the folly of the time past with the sentiments which his great predecessor Petrarch bequeathed to posterity, upon his review of that love and poetry which have given him immortality.

That natural jealousy which makes every man unwilling to allow much excellence in another always produces a disposition to believe that the mind grows old with the body; and that he, whom we are now forced to confess superior, is hastening daily to a level with ourselves. By delighting to think this of the living, we learn to think it of the dead; and Fenton, with all his kindness for Waller, has the luck to mark the exact time when his genius passed the zenith, which he places at his fifty-fifth year. This is to allot the mind but a small portion. Intellectual decay is doubtless not uncommon, but it seems not to be universal. Newton was in his eighty-fifth year improving his chronology a few days before his death; and Waller appears not, in my opinion, to have lost at eighty-two any part of his poetical power.

His sacred poems do not please like some of his other works; but before the fatal fifty-five, had he written on the same subjects, his success would hardly have been better.

It has been the frequent lamentation of good men, that verse has been too little applied to the purposes of worship, and many attempts have been made to animate devotion by pious poetry. That they have very seldom attained their end is sufficiently known, and it may not be improper to inquire why they have miscarried.

Let no pious ear be offended if I advance, in opposition to many authorities, that poetical devotion cannot often please. The doctrines of religion may indeed be defended in a didactic poem ; and he who has the happy power of arguing in verse will not lose it because his subject is sacred. A poet may describe the beauty and the grandeur of nature, the flowers of the spring, and the harvests of autumn, the vicissitudes of the tide, and the revolutions of the sky, and praise the Maker for his works, in lines which no reader shall lay aside. The subject of the disputation is not piety, but the motives to piety ; that of the description is not God, but the works of God.

Contemplative piety, or the intercourse between God and the human soul, cannot be poetical. Man admitted to implore the mercy of his Creator and plead the merits of his Redeemer is already in a higher state than poetry can confer.

The essence of poetry is invention ; such invention as, by producing something unexpected, surprises and delights. The topics of devotion are few, and being few are universally known ; but, few as they are, they can be made no more ; they can receive no grace from novelty of sentiment, and very little from novelty of expression.

Poetry pleases by exhibiting an idea more grateful to the mind than things themselves afford. This effect proceeds from the display of those parts of nature which attract, and the concealment of those which repel, the imagination ; but religion must be shown as it is, suppression and addition equally corrupt it, and such as it is, it is known already.

From poetry the reader justly expects, and from good poetry always obtains, the enlargement of his comprehension and elevation of his fancy ; but this is rarely to be hoped by Christians from metrical devotion. Whatever is great, desirable, or tremendous, is comprised in the name of the Supreme Being. Omnipotence cannot be exalted ; Infinity cannot be amplified ; Perfection cannot be improved.

The employments of pious meditation are faith, thanksgiving, repentance, and supplication. Faith, invariably uniform, cannot be invested by fancy with decorations. Thanksgiving, the most joyful of all holy effusions, yet addressed to a being without passions, is confined to a few modes, and is to be felt rather than expressed. Repentance, trembling in the presence of the judge, is not at leisure for

cadences and epithets. Supplication of man to man may diffuse itself through many topics of persuasion ; but supplication to God can only cry for mercy.

Of sentiments purely religious, it will be found that the most simple expression is the most sublime. Poetry loses its lustre and its power, because it is applied to the decoration of something more excellent than itself. All that pious verse can do is to help the memory and delight the ear, and for these purposes it may be very useful ; but it supplies nothing to the mind. The ideas of Christian theology are too simple for eloquence, too sacred for fiction, and too majestic for ornament : to recommend them by tropes and figures is to magnify by a concave mirror the sidereal hemisphere.

As much of Waller's reputation was owing to the softness and smoothness of his numbers, it is proper to consider those minute particulars to which a versifier must attend.

He certainly very much excelled in smoothness most of the writers who were living when his poetry commenced. The poets of Elizabeth had attained an art of modulation which was afterwards neglected or forgotten. Fairfax was acknowledged by him as his model, and he might have studied with advantage the poem of Davies,\* which, though merely philosophical, yet seldom leaves the ear ungratified.

But he was rather smooth than strong ; of *the full resounding line*, which Pope attributes to Dryden, he has given very few examples. The critical decision has given the praise of strength to Denham, and of sweetness to Waller.

His excellence of versification has some abatements. He uses the expletive *do* very frequently ; and though he lived to see it almost universally ejected, was not more careful to avoid it in his last compositions than in his first. Praise had given him confidence ; and finding the world satisfied, he satisfied himself.

His rhymes are sometimes weak words : *so* is found to make the rhyme twice in ten lines, and occurs often as a rhyme through his book.

His double rhymes in heroic verse have been censured by Mrs. Phillips, who was his rival in the translation of Corneille's *Pompey* ; and more faults might be found, were not the inquiry below attention.

He sometimes uses the obsolete termination of verbs, as “*waxeth*,” “*affecteth* ;” and sometimes retains the final syllable of the preterite,

\* Sir John Davies, intituled “*Nosce teipsum*. This Oracle expounded in two elegies ; 1. Of Humane Knowledge ; 2. Of the Soule of Man and the Immortalitie thereof, 1599.” R.



as "amazed," "supposed,"—of which I know not whether it is not to the detriment of our language that we have totally rejected them.

Of triplets he is sparing, but he did not wholly forbear them; of an Alexandrine he has given no example.

The general character of his poetry is elegance and gaiety. He is never pathetic, and very rarely sublime. He seems neither to have had a mind much elevated by nature nor amplified by learning. His thoughts are such as a liberal conversation and large acquaintance with life would easily supply. They had, however, then perhaps that grace of novelty which they are now often supposed to want by those who, having already found them in later books, do not know or inquire who produced them first. This treatment is unjust. Let not the original author lose by his imitators.

Praise, however, should be due before it is given. The author of Waller's Life ascribes to him the first practice of what Erythræus and some late critics call alliteration, of using in the same verse many words beginning with the same letter. But this knack, whatever be its value, was so frequent among early writers, that Gascoigne, a writer of the sixteenth century, warns the young poet against affecting it; Shakespeare, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, is supposed to ridicule it; and in another play the sonnet of Holofernes fully displays it.

He borrows too many of his sentiments and illustrations from the old mythology, for which it is vain to plead the example of ancient poets; the deities which they introduced so frequently were considered as realities, so far as to be received by the imagination, whatever sober reason might even then determine. But of these images time has tarnished the splendour. A fiction, not only detected but despised, can never afford a solid basis to any position, though sometimes it may furnish a transient allusion or slight illustration. No modern monarch can be much exalted by hearing that, as Hercules had his club, he has his navy.

But of the praise of Waller, though much may be taken away, much will remain; for it cannot be denied that he added something to our elegance of diction, and something to our propriety of thought; and to him may be applied what Tasso said, with equal spirit and justice, of himself and Guarini, when, having perused the *Pastor Fido*, he cried out, "If he had not read *Aminta*, he had not excelled it."

END OF VOL. I.







